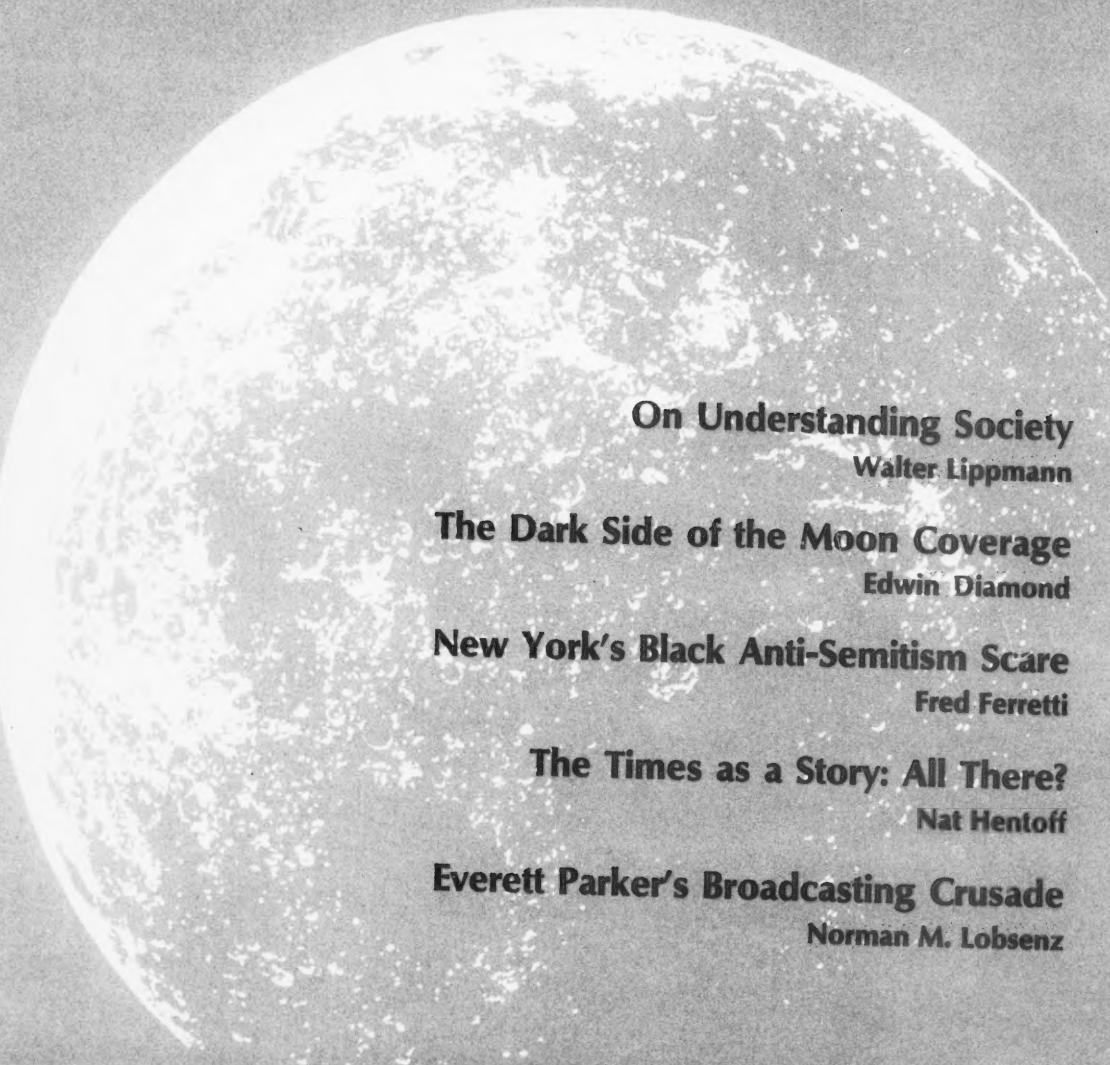


# COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Introductory  
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FALL 1969



**On Understanding Society**  
Walter Lippmann

**The Dark Side of the Moon Coverage**  
Edwin Diamond

**New York's Black Anti-Semitism Scare**  
Fred Ferretti

**The Times as a Story: All There?**  
Nat Hentoff

**Everett Parker's Broadcasting Crusade**  
Norman M. Lobsenz

... to assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and strengths, and to help define—or redefine—standards of honest, responsible service . . .

... to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent.

# COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Fall, 1969

*Columbia Journalism Review* is published quarterly under auspices of the faculty, alumni, and friends of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University.

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## Passing comment

### Chappaquiddick: more is not better

Just as the MIG fighter which recently swooped to a surprise landing in Miami shredded fundamental assumptions about U.S. radar defenses (and press coverage of the subject), reporting of Senator Edward Kennedy's Chappaquiddick auto accident exposed again persistent flaws in the American press. If journalism is capable of anything, it should be an ability clearly to convey basic statistics, description, "housekeeping" data. Yet consider the varying descriptions of the accident scene, starting with maps reproduced here from the *Boston Globe* (reprinted in *U.S. News & World Report*), *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Life*. How can one tiny island have so many differing configurations? How can a road be at once T-shaped, Y-shaped, and even [see *Newsweek* photo] X-shaped? What does the Dyke Road junction look like? August 1—two weeks after the accident—*Life* printed an eye-level photo looking toward Dyke Road, but not until *Newsweek*'s August 11 air view of the site—more than three weeks after the accident—could the reader of national media really visualize it. Where had all the photographers' Piper Cubs, helicopters, and hot-air balloons gone?

*Newsweek* excelled in an August 11 walking-driving tour of the scene by news editor Hal Bruno. Among other points, Bruno made clear the time required to walk from Dyke Bridge to the cookout site Kennedy and Mary Jo Kopechne had left—twenty-three minutes, without

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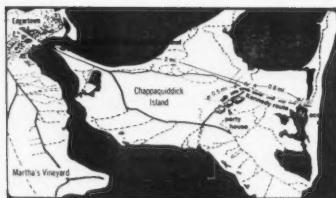
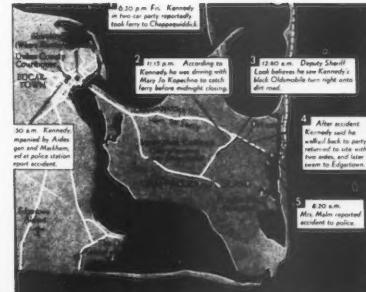
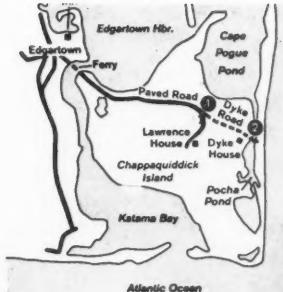
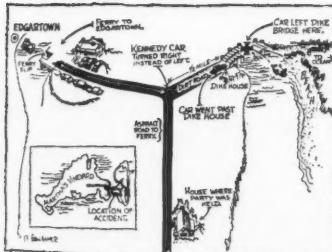
**EDITOR'S NOTE:** With this issue, Alfred Balk begins a year as Visiting Editor of *Columbia Journalism Review* while Editor James Boylan is on leave for advanced doctoral study. Mr. Balk formerly was a reporter for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, a free-lance writer for national magazines, and feature editor of *Saturday Review*.

handicaps of shock or fatigue—and the conspicuous availability of prompt aid: in addition to the publicized occupied, lighted home directly on Dyke Road, an unlocked volunteer fire station with a large red light denoting an alarm capable of summoning firemen in three minutes, and "half the people on the island" in fifteen. Still, there were loose ends. For example, would it have been really difficult for Kennedy—a reputedly strong swimmer despite past injuries—to have swum the 150 yards (or was it 100? 200?) from Chappaquiddick to Edgartown, as he claimed to have done? To our knowledge, no media dispatched a swimmer to try, though aspersions on this part of Kennedy's story enjoyed brief vogue.

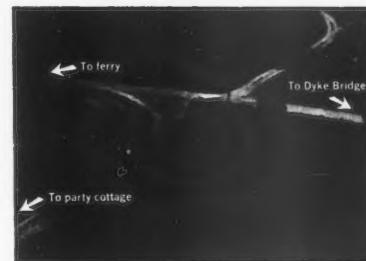
Then consider the young women—in the Hearstian manner, usually described as "girls," though all were in their twenties or thirties—who attended the July 18 cookout. At first, several reporters are convinced, two of the four young women (who live in Washington) might have been persuaded to talk. Esther Newberg declared that the public had a "right to hear something" and consented to interviews with, among others, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. "All that got her," one Washington reporter informs us, "was twice as many calls and reporters at her door, all asking her to say the same things for their papers."

"The Philadelphia *Bulletin*," he adds, "ran an interview with Rosemary Keough. The *Bulletin* man, she says, came to her door and asked questions, which she tried to shrug off. 'Did you know who was on the guest list?' he asked. She answered no. So the lead of his story was, 'Rosemary Keough said today that she didn't realize that she was going to a party where there would be married men without their wives.' She maintains that the entire story was a fabrication, written this way."

"As the weeks have gone by, the women have had to flee their homes, change their phone numbers, and although at first they were most gracious even when declining to talk, now a reporter who reaches one of them can expect a quick lecture and a door slammed in his face. It's the old story of 400 reporters just 'doing their jobs' until potential news sources can't live. Reporters jumped



The many shapes of the road and island: (clockwise, from left): Newsweek; U.S. News & World Report-Boston Globe; Life; Time; Newsweek air photo.



so hard and so fast, and so crucified those willing to talk, that information sources dried up."

Perhaps a note in *AP Log* of October 5-11 best sums up the underlying faults of attitude and conception:

In repeated trips to cover the developments in Pennsylvania in the Mary Jo Kopechne autopsy hearings, Philadelphia's Lee Linder has developed a number of information sources in Wilkes-Barre. They helped Friday as he scored a beat of nearly an hour on a judge's decision to deny an autopsy and to set a hearing date.

It was the highlight event of the week in the long-running story, gave AP a clean sweep for the cycle, and was a big factor in the score of 80 per cent for the week in stories in two states. . . . The judge and attorneys were upset by the early disclosure, cooled off later. . . .

It is not enough to say that only pressure from the press could have forced certain facts about Chappaquiddick into the open; one must also ask to what extent confusion has been compounded by the *Front Page*-style rush for bulletins, exclusive "angles," shakily conceived speculation and gossip—in brief, the sins of superficiality, haste, and herd journalism which the press is too ready to convince itself that it long ago outgrew.

## The Wisconsin boycott

And if amidst all the evils of this decade, you have not seen men and women, known moments that you would like to multiply, the Lord himself cannot help you. —Walter Lippmann (1922).

When Mr. Lippmann [see page 5] wrote these words, he might have been referring to our time and to citizens of our time such as Wisconsin weekly newspaper publisher William F. Schanen, Jr. For Mr. Schanen, president of Port Publications, Inc., of Port Washington, Wis., has proved himself of a stripe that we pray can only multiply. As recounted in *Life* and other publications recently, Schanen has been subject to an economically devastating advertising boycott simply because he insists that the underground newspaper *Kaleidoscope*—which he prints under contract but with which he frequently disagrees—has the right to exist. Right-wing Wisconsin industrialist Benjamin Grob, who disapproves of *Kaleidoscope*, has tried to force Schanen to discontinue printing it by initiating a boycott which has cost three Schanen weeklies thousands of dollars. Still Schanen has stood firm.

We applaud William Schanen. More than that,

we command to all who believe in his cause—the historic right of access to the press to express unpopular opinions—participation in an assistance program organized by the National Newspaper Association. The association, through its magazine *Publishers' Auxiliary*, has established a fund for weekly purchase of full-page ads in Schanen's largest paper, the Ozaukee *Press*. A sprinkling of out-of-state job-printing orders also has helped.

Early in October in Denver, a John Birch Society chapter leader urged a citywide circulation boycott of the *Denver Post*, saying, "We are going to bring the news media to heel." This, more vividly than anything else published recently, reaffirms the ultimate motivations of authoritarians such as the Birchers and industrialist Grob. As Stephen J. Myers, Jr., of the Johnstown, N. Y., *Patriot*, wrote to *Publishers' Auxiliary*:

These groups who constantly talk about democracy are among the first to use this freedom to punish others who are not in agreement with them. . . . I think it is time that we editors and publishers demonstrate what we preach—freedom of the press. . . . Let's see how many editors and publishers will put their belief in freedom of the press in monetary form.

## On suppressing advertisements

And what, in the year MCMLXIX, can be said of the decision of several publishers to refuse to report on, review, or accept advertising for movies rated "X" by the Motion Picture Association of America? This now is the announced policy of two Nevada newspapers published by Richard J. Schuster; Eugene C. Pulliam's dailies in Arizona and Indiana; and the Copley newspapers.

For now, we can conceive of nothing which would better illuminate the mentality underlying such policy than perusal of the announcement by one of the newspapers, along with the "ac-

ceptable" display advertising surrounding it, and we herewith present it without further comment:



## Minorities and the media: what progress?

In the eventful months since the Kerner Commission's critique of racial imbalance in the news media, every thoughtful analysis of the problem has emphasized two points: the need for 1) new training mechanisms to increase the supply of nonwhite editorial candidates; and 2) new approaches to recruiting and placement. As previously noted in these pages, neither point has been addressed at a rate approaching "all deliberate speed." Nonetheless, in great measure due to Ford Foundation support, there is progress.

Last August at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, for instance, thirty-one blacks, four Puerto Ricans, and one Mexican-American were graduated from the second intensive summer program to train members of minority groups for journalism careers. Former CBS News President Fred W. Friendly, now Edward R. Murrow Professor of Journalism at Columbia, was program director. Of the thirty-six participants (compared to twenty last year) in the ten-week program, twenty-three were new to journalism, including two former letter carriers and two teachers. All thirty-six graduates are now working in news or about to begin.

Ford support also has been crucial to training

*Continued on page 56*

# On Understanding Society

## Walter Lippmann

"For when there is panic in the air, with one crisis tripping over the heels of another, actual dangers mixed with imaginary scares, there is no chance at all for the constructive use of reason, and any order soon seems preferable to any disorder."

So wrote Walter Lippmann in *Public Opinion* in 1922.

Some weeks before his eightieth birthday, at the invitation of Prof. Fred W. Friendly of the Columbia journalism faculty, Mr. Lippmann held a seminar with a small group of graduate students to discuss the contemporary applicability of this and other observations from his long and distinguished career. The text below is excerpted from the three-hour dialogue which resulted.

**Public opinion has been the third force that really changed American policy on the Vietnam war. How did that come about?**

Well, the war was very distant, nobody was interested in it, and the Johnson method of handling the war was to conceal it from the American people. In the first year of the fighting, this was the Johnson escalation, because before that it was not really a war in the sense that it is now.

It was concealed by the fact that the Army which was sent to Vietnam to do the fighting was really a professional army. It was not a drafted army. What Johnson did was to cannibalize the American forces all over the world, and build up probably the best army the United States has had in the world. But that army could last only about a year, until its term expired. During the next year or two Johnson more and more couldn't hide the

fact that we were drafting men to fight that war.

Now, drafting men to fight a war 10,000 miles away is something that no sensible great power has ever attempted. The British, in all their period of imperial rule in the nineteenth century, never conscripted Englishmen to fight in Asia. They always relied on volunteers, professional soldiers, and on mercenaries. They hired the Indians, the Gurkhas; regiments of Iranians and other people from the Middle East, and so on; but there were no Englishmen conscripted to fight around the world. Johnson, who knows no history, didn't realize what a thing he was doing when he began to conscript an army to fight a war that nobody believed in particularly anyway—nobody had ever had it explained to them, nobody could explain the reason for it—10,000 miles away. It was that that began to arouse the American people to realize what this was. And Johnson kept getting one general after another to come forward and say we were winning it when we were not winning it. Finally the Tet Offensive came, and he tried to get generals to say we would only take 35,000 men. But finally it was leaked out from Washington that Westmoreland wanted 206,000 men. And that figure broke Johnson's back. That was when public opinion revolted. That's why Johnson had to retire.

**One of the reasons for all the turmoil in the country the last few years has been the feeling of a lot of young people that our governmental institutions are not responsive to the needs and feelings of the people. But apparently you do believe that at least in an informal way our government is responsive to public opinion?**

Well, it's responsive to the kind of thing that I was talking about, which is being for the war or against it. The fact that the country came to be against the war is very important. Whether you can get a public opinion sharpened and attuned and made accurate to more specific reforms, I'm not sure. And I think that one of the difficulties—the difficulty with television, the difficulty with this turmoil—is that you cannot refine public opinion and educate it to very detailed and complicated things. I don't expect that any large audience, for instance, could ever really understand

the problem of decentralizing the schools in New York City. I think it's just too complicated and difficult. It just won't catch in the net. So I don't want to sound too optimistic about public opinion.

**How many problems do you think this country can digest at one time without breaking at the seams? We have Vietnam, the cities, the race problem. Are these likely to create a permanent cleavage?**

Well, that's a problem I've been worried about all my life, but I have begun to realize, since I wrote *Public Opinion* and also while I was writing it, that the capacity of the general public—on which we're dependent for votes—to take on many problems is very limited. I wrote a book called *The Phantom Public* [1925], arguing that really what public opinion in the end could do was to say yes or no. It couldn't do anything very much more complicated than that. It couldn't say three-quarters or five-sixths but not two-sevenths—it isn't able to do that. That's what a scientist has to do. That's what an administrator has to do, what a public servant has to do. But public opinion as a mass can't do that. And it's one of the great unsolved problems of democracy: how are you going to make popular government—because it's always going to be popular, in the sense of involving a great many people—how are you going to make that work in the face of the problems which have become infinitely complicated even in the last twenty years?

**In that regard, how do you see the role of the mass media, if in fact public opinion is not responsive to very sophisticated and very subtle problems? Is the role of the media to oversimplify them in the hopes of mobilizing some force?**

Well, undoubtedly the mass media oversimplify. The American people are very simplistic, they want to be told that things are absolute, that they're black or white. They don't want to be bothered very long.

**So what should the mass media do?**

That is the question, I admit, but first of all, I don't know enough about the mass media. I know something about journalism, but I know

very little about broadcasting. I listen to broadcast journalism, but for the news at night; I don't get the news from it. I feel utterly dissatisfied almost always. Of course, I'm very interested to see a picture of something happening. That's very interesting—a splashdown, that's wonderful. But as for the problems which are very difficult, urban problems and all, you can't find out about them. You can get a smell of them. You know a little bit about what they're like, and then you can read about them, or somebody can lecture to you about them. But broadcast journalism has not only a terribly simplifying effect, but a distorting effect, I think, because it makes everything more dramatic than it should be, more interesting, more amusing. And the world of life isn't that. It's prosaic.

The current controversy over advertising of cigarettes seems to raise a central question about the relationship between public opinion and social policy. If the scientists and doctors who have no economic involvement in the industry are correct, and they seem to be, then there should be some public outcry about this; it's not just a problem of public opinion's not getting to the legislators.

But there's a good deal of feeling. You see, this pressure has worked. Public opinion doesn't always work through big mass meetings or demonstrations.

**How much do you think public opinion has become synonymous with public relations?**

Well, these professionals at public relations are too much for me. There is an awful manipulation of public opinion going on all the time, no doubt about it. It's not the whole thing, though. Public relations was unable to do anything about the Vietnam war. They tried to. Johnson tried all the techniques he could to hide that war, and then to make it acceptable. And it didn't work.

**How is public opinion best measured? Is the Gallup Poll, for instance, an effective measure of public opinion?**

The Gallup Poll is pretty good, if it's very broadly taken. But 96.3 per cent, that's foolishness. The taxicab poll that most people take

when they ride in a taxi and find out what the driver thinks—that has some validity. My wife comes home and tells me about the hairdressers and what they think. Very reactionary, I assure you. They're afraid to go out at night.

If you're a public man—say, a President or a candidate or a good journalist—you suddenly know what the public feeling is. Why did Johnson retire, do you think? He knew that he was beaten. And where did he get that? He got it from polls, a little bit, but mostly he just knew,

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*"The fact that the country came to be against the war is very important."*

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as a public man very well trained in public affairs—he assumed it. I don't think you can measure everything.

Public opinion isn't instantaneous. You can't take flashlights of public opinion and get it right every time. But a man like Johnson, who is made to hear an awful lot, and the representatives in Congress who are representative in the sense that they're like the others—you talk to them and you know what people in his district are thinking or feeling, and what they're prejudiced against or for.

You once wrote that the hardest thing to report is chaos, even evolving chaos. That was in 1922. Now, 1968 was a very chaotic year; how do you think journalism performed then?

Well, if I remember what I said in 1922, the world actually—and I think I used the phrase of William James—is a "blooming, buzzing confusion," and the mind's eye has to form a picture out of really a very chaotic thing. And that's done by the creation of stereotypes, which are ways of looking at things; and then after a while when you have these, that's all you see—what the stereotype says to you. That's all that comes through.

Now, I think that today the good reporters, both electronic and newspaper, are much more

sophisticated and educated men than reporters were in 1922 when I was writing. They're much more aware of the dangers of superficiality and so on. And they strike me as extremely intelligent. I think on the whole 1968 left us rather confused. Everybody was confused, including the newspapermen, because they were dealing with a situation for which they had no preparation.

**Does it seem to you that political writers of the country are swinging to the right? If so, how far to the right do you think they will go?**

Well, there's no doubt that—whether that's age or personal ambition or what—men do that. It's a rule any journalist would know: it's always safer to be conservative than not. You're much less on the defensive. You have much less to explain yourself for. The Left has recently done some very vicious things, I think. But on the whole, in the lifetime of most men who are now fifty or more, the Right is the one that's done the vicious things. Fascism was very vicious. I don't think anybody can predict how far it will go, because it's action and reaction, how the Left acts and how the Right acts.

**How would you compare the social rebelliousness of the generation coming of age now with the social rebelliousness of the one that came of age immediately after World War I? And why, in the seven decades we have had in the century, have these two produced the greatest generation gaps, when they seem to be such dissimilar decades?**

First, of course, there was rebellion and disillusion at the end of the First World War, and that produced the Twenties, in which a lot of the people who now are extremely Left just expatriated themselves. A whole colony formed in Paris of people who just couldn't stand this country. It was too awful for them. Hemingway belonged to that generation, Archibald MacLeish belonged to it. But what is new that I never knew then is the violence and disruption. They were rebellious, they made speeches, they wrote books, but they didn't come into the classroom and say, "By God, you're not teaching what we like, you're not going to teach." That didn't exist.

This man Herbert Marcuse has written a book,

as you know, about the limits of toleration, and he doesn't want to tolerate people who don't agree with him. He says you mustn't tolerate people who are wrong. Those are the people he doesn't agree with. You mustn't tolerate the Right or the middle, you must only tolerate the Left, and the Left must decide whom to tolerate. Now, that philosophy, that is new. That is a revival of a thing that started quite differently about the middle of the nineteenth century and became anarchism, with people like Bakunin, who was the great antagonist of Marx. Bakunin was a Russian nobleman who had a romantic view of the Russian serf, and if only he were in charge of things all evil would disappear from the world.

But it was an amiable and decent thing. It was impracticable, of course, and it disappeared, and

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***"Public opinion doesn't always work through mass meetings or demonstrations."***

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now it has revived, and that is the significant and dangerous thing about the recent times. We saw it abroad. We saw it in Berkeley. We see it all around: this feeling that you must stop things from happening that you don't agree with, and that liberalism is the great enemy.

**But the power of the economic system is so vast, and yet so destructive and unaware of its destructiveness, that the people who see that power and that destructiveness are frustrated, and feel they can't work within traditional lines to counter the power, and so the question really is: is the society capable of change?**

It is changing all the time. It is changing much more rapidly than we know how to understand it. But can it be remade to your heart's desire? I would say no, it cannot. And that isn't because the Right is in control, it is because this is the way of life in which we are embedded. Just as primitive man was embedded in his system of tribes and so on, we're embedded in this, and we

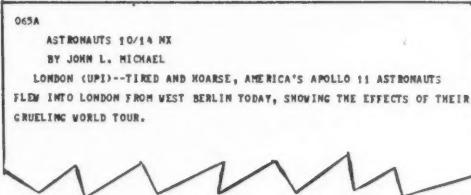
can't get out of it. It's like jumping out of your skin.

It is possible that the rebellion of the young may be a product of technology's getting out of our hands, so that we really have produced a generation that is more different from their parent generation than ever has been the case before. Could you point to a time in history, perhaps, when you believe the same thing happened?

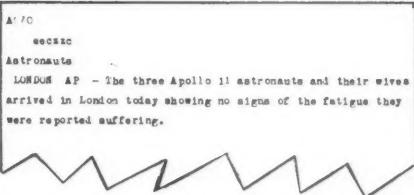
I think you're absolutely right, and I think it's fundamental. The technological gap and the generation gap are the same thing. And the young people today are coming into a world for which there was no preparation in custom. There never was a world like this. Not that any revolutionist made it. It was created by technology and science. They don't know what to do about it, and the older people don't know what to do about it, either. They don't understand it themselves. That is absolutely the core of our problems. How will we be able to create a capacity to govern this enormously new and enormously complicated and very rapidly changing social environment? That is the problem. And there's no answer. We may not solve it in a generation. That's the problem today. The revolutionary—all that business—is of no importance except as a byproduct of that.

Of course, one of the most revolutionary technological inventions of our time—much more revolutionary I think than people realize generally—is contraception: The Pill. It absolutely knocked the family to pieces. The old reasons for creating and holding families together have been knocked out by this technological interference in the relationship between procreation and sexual life. And that is felt everywhere. There's no family, there's no neighborhood, there are no clans.

## Quick Recovery Department



—UPI, Oct. 14, 7:37 a.m.



—AP, Oct. 14, 7:48 a.m.

But how do you get around the problem of being ruled by a generation brought up in a time of slower change? Really, the problem seems to be re-educating Congressmen and Senators and the like, and this is the media's responsibility. But how do you get at them?

Well, this is an autobiography for me. I have lived through this. I feel it. I have felt it for years. And I have lived right in the midst of this change, never really understanding it very well and knowing I didn't understand it very well, not knowing what to do about it. I don't feel able to say what

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*"We're going to have to create the general knowledge that we don't know."*

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I'm going to tell a Congressman to do. I myself don't know what to do. We might as well be honest about it with ourselves: we are not in a position yet to re-educate the masses because we don't know what to teach them. And that is one of the critical conditions of our time.

Is it more important for us to educate the Congressmen or to educate the Middlewestern farmer?

First of all, it's most important to educate ourselves. And that is really absolutely fundamental. We know what to do about a particular thing, but about the general situation we don't know. And the fact that we don't know is perhaps the beginning of wisdom. We're going to have to create the general knowledge that we don't know.

Technical virtuosity there was, but also a "numbing banality... a sort of basic piffle." A study in trivialization.

EDWIN DIAMOND

## The dark side of the moonshot coverage

■ President Nixon, in a burst of egregious rhetoric which must have shaken the Bible Belt as severely as any recent Supreme Court declaration, proclaimed it "the greatest week since the Creation." Elmer Lower, president of ABC News, more modestly called it the "news story of the century" (and assigned 300 men to cover it—considerably more than were needed to launch the Saturn 5 rocket from Cape Kennedy). Indisputably, the 500,000-mile, eight-day flight of Apollo 11 to the moon was the most watched and written about single event in history.

—In this country, according to A. C. Nielsen data, 53.5 million TV households (93.9 per cent of everyone owning a set) watched the coverage, an average of fifteen hours, thirty-five minutes—the largest U.S. TV audience ever.

—Fifty national networks elsewhere relayed coverage for 230 hours of communications satellite time, exceeding all previous records.

Many American daily and some large foreign newspapers published special sections or extensive features, with the *New York Times* employing the largest headline type it has ever used—96-point, or one-inch high—for the banner lines

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Edwin Diamond, a senior editor of *Newsweek*, writes frequently for *Columbia Journalism Review*.

MEN LAND ON MOON and, in the last edition, MAN WALKS ON MOON.

There was, as has been recounted, much in which the media could take pride. More than for any previous event, the world was indeed a global village. Among large populaces, only the citizens of China and the Soviet Union were denied simultaneous participation.

On a less cosmic level, Apollo 11 also represented one of those major events like a political convention, a war, or an assassination in which competitors meet head to head for audience attention and critical acclaim. Here, almost all the competitive verdicts were clear-cut: most TV critics agreed that tireless and able Walter Cronkite easily trounced the teams of Huntley-Brinkley-McGee on NBC and Bergman-Reynolds on ABC. AP bested UPI, obtaining up to 70 per cent of the page one play in competitive editions during the flight. Among newspapers, the *New York Times* was in a class by itself.

Yet when all the splash and dash of media coverage are subjected to some routine tests of journalistic performance, one feels similarities to the morning after an especially memorable party. NASA had been host to an exciting week-long event, all right; the three astronauts were perfect heroes with whom to spend time—competent, clear-eyed, courageous. But precisely what were

all those other people doing there—Steve Allen, Julie Harris, James Earl Jones, Duke Ellington and his band? Though the networks kept insisting on the “epic” nature of the event, they succeeded in turning history into an extra-length Johnny Carson show. The ABC documentary on Apollo, for instance, was narrated by Efrem Zimbalist, Jr., the “star” of an ABC-TV dramatic series. A touch of blatant commercialism is to be expected. But the danger is that media which took so many bows may begin to believe their own press releases.

The networks, according to *Variety*, spent some \$13 million (including millions lost on pre-empted time), and the print media had as many years to prepare for the lunar landing as NASA had. Did anyone get his money’s or his time’s worth? Was there a better way to spend the money and time? More to the journalistic point, were all the essential facts clearly presented? Were the appropriate conclusions drawn from the facts? Was the event placed in context and related to other concerns of the audience? Was the meaning of the moment isolated and elaborated?

Any critical inspection of the dark side of the moon coverage exposes embarrassingly basic weaknesses and structural faults in media performance. According to the usual formulation of the way the media cover a story, TV and radio give the breaking news, and newspapers and magazines provide the background and interpretation. In the case of Apollo 11, the full news failed to get through on TV—the hours of continuous coverage to the contrary; in print, with only a few exceptions, the background context and interpretation never materialized adequately—nine years of preparation time to the contrary. Here we were, Earthmen, ready to set foot on another body in the solar system, Earth’s satellite—and not, incidentally, a “planet” as several commentators and writers persisted in misnaming the moon. Flank speed, clear out the white space, here is a story that newspapers could really run with. So one might have thought. But the performance of preparing the readers for the event is spotty at best.

The Los Angeles *Times*, for example, must be counted among one of the four or five best papers

in the country, but did not offer any distinguished or distinctive material before the flight, though it serves an area that is buoyed up by the aerospace industry. The *Washington Post*, another superior newspaper, has a highly competent science staff but it was confined before liftoff to straight advance stories plus one major Sunday turn. The *Post*’s reporting was superior—if it only had been laid out and illustrated with flair. Even in Houston, home base of Mission Control and the astronauts, the *Chronicle* and the *Post* had to flesh out their largely routine coverage with copy from the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post-Los Angeles Times Services*.

The thought of men going to the moon stirred few imaginative juices even in the most committed media space boosters. *Life*, America’s foremost picture magazine, has been a showcase of the national space program since a peculiar 1962 financial arrangement gave it the magazine rights to the astronauts’ “personal stories” [see box]. Yet despite *Life*’s close partnership in the space program, the magazine’s major preparatory effort consisted mainly of a coy farewell to the “old” moon plus twelve pages of color pictures of famous tides around the world (the moon’s pull on Earth—get it?). To my knowledge only two newspapers attempted to prepare material equal to the event: the *New York Times* and *Today*, a Gannett paper in the Cape Kennedy area. Taking into account the respective resources available, *Today* did a much better job.

The *Times*’ coverage began taking shape last March 10, when, in a memo to his editors, production men, and cartographers, Managing Editor A. M. Rosenthal asked what turned out to be some wrong questions: “Are there people outside the paper whose brains we should start picking for planning and contributions? What special qualities can we give our coverage, because of the talents and techniques available to us, that nobody can match?” The *Times* proceeded to pick brains preponderantly outside the paper, and mostly official NASA brains at that. In fact, the result of Rosenthal’s memo—the *Times*’ major preparatory supplement, *Man and the Moon*—resembled more a bland government history than an independent analysis.

The *Times'* own science and space staff has suffered from some defections and a split personality in recent years; the paper had, until a post-flight realignment in mid-September, both a Science News Coordinator and a Science Editor. In the event, the staff writers were outnumbered in the supplement pages by the guest government contributors. *Man and the Moon* contains a modest fifteen pages of editorial matter, after ads and the cover are subtracted. Of the thirty-one articles in the section, only seven were written by *Times* staff men (including a short feature by television critic Jack Gould). As if to underline the *Times'* own apparent staff limitations, one of the longer stories in the package was by Henry F. S. Cooper, Jr., a staff writer from *The New Yorker*. No fewer than sixteen articles were signed by present or past NASA officials. Most of these were official accounts with all the life squeezed out of them, despite heavy rewriting by the *Times*. Little of the real flesh-and-blood vitality—and human frailties—of the past decade of the American space venture were offered in these accounts.

Among the missing stories, to take only the most obvious examples, were the Cold War beginnings of the space program; John F. Kennedy's search for a space spectacular "that the U.S. could win"; the spurious nature of the "moon race" with the Russians (we raced only ourselves); the separate fiefdoms and the abrasive clash of personalities in NASA; the logrolling politics of space appropriations and decisions that put the Manned Spacecraft Center in Texas and other installations in Louisiana and Massachusetts; the shoddy workmanship of some of the biggest U.S. firms and slipshod Government management procedures that led to the death of three astronauts—in short, the full, as opposed to the official, story of Apollo. Instead of the carefully pruned Government accounts, how much better to have loosed some young tigers—or some old ones—on the *Times* staff back in March. But the *Times* chose, as *Times Talk*, the paper's house organ later explained, to send its Science News Coordinator to NASA headquarters, where he was "promised full cooperation."

At the same time the three American networks were also getting in bed with NASA. This union,

however, was a little more natural. Previously in these pages [Summer, 1965], I have observed that the alliance of TV and the U.S. space program was a marriage made in heaven; that the network news organizations needed the space program to employ fully their undeniable journalistic muscle during dry news spells between Presidential election years. What I didn't see quite so clearly at the time was the obvious corollary that the space program needs the TV networks. Like Tang, Gulf Oil, Western Electric, Philco-Ford, or any of the other TV advertisers who utilized the tube during the flight to sell their products, NASA must push space spectaculars to win friends, influence Congressmen, and keep the budget appropriations coming in. This public relations factor, as much as abstract doctrines about Freedom of Information and the American

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*"Here, more than for any previous event, the world was indeed a global village."*

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Public's Right to Know, accounts for NASA's laudable open-skies information policy.

Less than a decade ago, when the infant U.S. space program was still in the grip of the military, space launchings were clandestine ventures held behind high security fences. Today at Cape Kennedy a media city springs up for each launching. For Apollo 11, a permanent concrete stand worthy of Belmont or Santa Anita held 4,000 pencil reporters, and a babble of foreign voices testified to the international nature of the event. No fewer than fifty-five countries were represented, according to NASA, including Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia. Alongside the grandstand, a trailer city of radio-TV vans brought the whole drama live and in color to listeners around the world. After the launching, much of the news corps was airlifted by commercial planes to Houston, where NASA public information offices kept them informed twenty-four hours a day.

Most newsmen and even those critics who cast a cold eye on the Government in general have tended to regard the open skies policy as a valued example of reality television—an actual event in actual time—and thus a great boon to the viewer. Yet Apollo 11 demonstrated that this form of reality TV is at best a mixed blessing; there are only thirty to forty minutes of *real* reality TV in a space flight, even one as soaring as the eight-day Apollo 11 mission. There are the last minutes of the countdown, the five or six minutes of liftoff and powered flight within range of the camera, and at the very end the twenty or thirty minutes on the carrier waiting for the spaceship to splash down. That leaves the main events beyond the TV eye. To an extent, NASA has been helpful about these gaps in the pictures: handheld cameras, for example, have been deployed for in-flight telecasts from the past few Apollo missions, and it is common knowledge among the trade that they are done as *media events*.

If NASA was able to oblige the networks with in-flight and on-the-moon telecasts that solved part of the reality TV problem, it was not able to do so much for the visual medium during the rest of the mission, and especially for those thirty-two-odd hours the networks had cleared from Sunday morning, July 20, to Monday evening, July 21. Indeed, news executives at CBS, NBC, and ABC had to convince the money men at the level of William Paley, Robert Sarnoff, and Leonard Goldenson: 1) to cancel regular commercial programming for the hours on the moon; 2) to pay for elaborate sets and moon simulators to enable TV to provide video with the audio; and 3) to sign the checks for such guest talent as former astronaut Walter Schirra, who reportedly has a \$100,000 contract with CBS.

Producers began lining up talent for their coverage, matching poet-for-poet (ABC had James Dickey, CBS had Marianne Moore); media-personality-for media-personality (NBC mobilized Barbara Walters and Joe Garagiola, ABC had Steve Allen and the premiere of "Moon Maiden" by Duke Ellington, and CBS offered Orson Welles); astronaut-for-astronaut (to counter the CBS coup in getting Schirra, NBC signed up *two* astronauts); scientist-for-scientist (ABC

had Robert Jastrow, NBC had Harold Urey); and pundit-for-pundit (Marshall McLuhan and Bill Moyers on ABC, Rod McKuen and Marya Manne on NBC, Ray Bradbury and Arthur Goldberg on CBS). By launching day, the producers found that they had more commitments and more talent than they could effectively employ. One scientist signed by one of the networks as a commentator said he had a "great sense of sitting around and not being used; the producers didn't seem to have too much understanding of the science of the event."

Before the launching, the single best Apollo story from a journalistic viewpoint was the role of Wernher von Braun and other German-born alumni of Peenemünde. The imposing von Braun had built the Saturn 5 rocket and was always ready when a NASA appropriations bill floundered to appear and win over Congress. The *New York Times'* Bernard Weinraub sniffed at the edge of the story in an interview with Dr. Kurt Debus, a quiet man with a Heidelberg dueling scar who is now the director of the Kennedy Space Center.

During the pre-launch news conference at Cape Kennedy there was almost a novelistic contretemps when a West German radio correspondent asked von Braun to answer a question in German so he could record it for his listeners. Von Braun handled the curve ball nimbly, answering first in English. Norman Mailer, special correspondent for *Life*, took it all in. In fact, Mailer's *Life* articles, for which he will earn a reported \$1 million after book and overseas rights are sold,

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*"NASA had been host to an exciting event, but what were those others doing there?"*

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made von Braun the central figure of the narrative. Mailer saw the subtleties of relationship between the American-born NASA directors and the German-born field leaders, ("NASA is sensitive about origins," he wrote); he saw the dia-

lectic of the news conference as von Braun—"sound, sensible, quick as mercury"—supplied the lead for the A.M.s and the overnights while von Braun's co-conferees dawdled and bobbed questions. He observed the fatuous reporters who applauded and gave a standing ovation to the people they were supposed to be questioning.

This adulation was particularly galling. One would think that reporters temporarily check their friendships and even their patriotism at the door of news conferences and go in and ask enlightening questions. Instead, many newsmen apparently see themselves as agents of the subject rather than as his potential adversaries. Thus the president of the National Association of Science Writers, a newspaperwoman who should know better, recently expressed her "thrill" at having had "a tiny role in mankind's historical step"—she had been in Houston covering the flight. And Walter Cronkite, who also should know better, moved out of his critic's seat on the aisle at a New York Sigma Delta Chi meeting, to defend the space program against "left-wing opposition."

Once the astronauts left earth, the coverage,—apart from live pickups from the principals—deteriorated. In this second flight phase there were outright errors of fact (APOLLO BREAKS OUT OF EARTH'S PULL, the Houston *Chronicle* misinformed its readers). Armstrong and Aldrin set down on the moon after an agonizing descent during which their computer malfunctioned, their fuel ran low, dust clouds obscured their vision in the final seconds, and Mission Control was at a loss to know where precisely the Eagle had landed. Yet there was little enlightenment from the networks about what was happening. The full story of those final two minutes of the Eagle's descent was not put together until at least four days later—mostly by Richard Witkin of the New York *Times*, a pencil reporter working in New York with his curiosity and his telephone. One of the old hands at space reporting who had another beat at the *Times* and had been drafted for the moon coverage, Witkin had heard along with everyone else Aldrin's cryptic messages about "Program Alarm 1202 . . . Program Alarm 1201 . . . Program Alarm 1203." Curious, after he returned to New York he began phoning

various sources at Mission Control. By Thursday afternoon, after the astronauts had splashed down in the Pacific, Witkin had his story. He described how the *Eagle* had landed with "the margin of success . . . much narrower than the world realized." He quoted Lt. Gen. Samuel C. Phillips, director of Project Apollo, as saying: "We came awfully close to having to abort."

Witkin doesn't claim an exclusive; he says that Jules Bergman, the hard-working science editor of ABC, developed much the same material about the same time. Also Rudy Abramson, of the Los Angeles *Times* and Tom O'Toole of the Washington *Post* apparently performed creditably as bird dogs and were the first to get tapes of the touch-and-go phase of the lunar descent.

Especially revealing is a log of NBC's coverage kept by Kenneth Paul, a 1969 Dartmouth graduate who served last summer as a magazine trainee:

In the first hours after lunar touchdown, there seems to be a failure to keep abreast of breaking news . . . insufficient explanation of the "minor problems" that arose: the communications difficulties, the landing. . . . Topless showgirls in Las Vegas are shown uncorking champagne at the moment of landing. . . . Ray Scherer report from NBC's European Space Center . . . still more reactions than news. Good feature on the fantastic interest and coverage in West Germany, an unconscious ironic set-up for later talk with von Braun. Cologne experts give frighteningly clipped comments. . . . BBC moon expert Patrick Moore: "No admiration can be too great. This is obviously a moment that humanity can never forget." . . . Mrs. Armstrong tells reporters, "I'm just about as excited as you-all are." Still more reactions. Rev. Herman Weber in special Wapakoneta (Armstrong's hometown) service. . . . Mrs. Pat Collins with intelligent, sharp rejoinder to the newsman's limp question, "Isn't Mike a little disappointed up there with the others down on the moon?"—"Don't you think he's probably with them in spirit?" Asked if she'd watch the moon walk on TV—what an idiotic question—she came back, "Oh positively—Is anyone going to bed?" . . . Interview with Sen. Muskie . . . A Truffaut-esque piece on space pioneer Hermann Oberst and his protege von Braun—the old codger eats cake while von Braun drones on about the old man's visionary contribution. . . .

When the story returned to earth, there was

the same dearth of reportorial digging, on the tube and in newspapers. One blank centered on the astronauts, who had gone into quarantine to protect the world against extraterrestrial germs and, some thought half facetiously, to protect their contract with *Life* and Field Enterprises. A few enterprising reporters such as Evert Clark of *Newsweek* managed to penetrate the isolation barrier by the simple expedient of interviewing on a not-for-attribution basis the official who had been interviewing the astronauts. As a result, much of what the astronauts had to say in their stories in *Life* proved hardly fresh at all.

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***"What will save  
the media from their  
inadequacies in the next  
story of the century?"***

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Another, more serious blank involved the growing dissatisfaction of scientists within NASA over the dominance of the engineers and what scientists considered undue emphasis on public relations. Here was a story of conflict and controversy, the kind on which reporters are supposed to thrive. Feelings were so inflamed that at one point early in the moonwalk the scientists, fuming at what they regarded as time-wasting planting of the U.S. flag and a telephone call from the President, actually phoned mission control and chivvied them about "civic ceremonies" when the crew was supposed to be collecting priceless rock samples. In fact, the dissatisfactions dated at least from last April, but it was not until the Manned Spacecraft Center's director of science, Dr. Wilmot Hess, announced his resignation on August 1 that anyone developed the story of the "scientists' complaint." And then only one newsman, Victor Cohn of the *Washington Post*, did the story in detail with quotes and background. On August 5, one of the astronaut/scientists, Dr. F. Curtis Michel, resigned—the

fourth such scientist/astronaut (as contrasted to pilot/astronaut) to do so; not until September was Michel interviewed extensively about his conviction that NASA discriminated against the scientist/astronauts in flight assignments.

Where had all the reporters gone? Just possibly the constant blaring of the ubiquitous "squawk boxes" in Houston—there are perhaps 250 at the MSC and in rooms and hotels where reporters gather—may inhibit performance of basic news work; it is as if the overload of sensory stimuli by eager information officers at NASA has made "facts" and "leads" effortless to acquire and, in the process, the muscles and synapses of the media have atrophied. It may even signify a permanent genetic change in the media, as more Government and private agencies discover that the way to keep newsmen flabby is to spoon feed them steadily with more information than they can use.

Another bobble at Houston involved a sin of commission rather than omission. When the first samples of moon rocks arrived at the Lunar Receiving Laboratory, the hard-core specialists standing by applauded and stamped their feet and sent out lead after lead as successive protective gear came off and the rocks became visible to all. What they largely failed to point out was that an unmanned Surveyor probe had soft-landed on the moon a few years before and radioed back a good deal of the same information that the Apollo 11 rocks were disclosing—at considerably cheaper rates than Apollo. Moreover, the report of the Surveyor findings had been published in the magazine *Science* by Prof. Anthony Turkevich only a few weeks before the Apollo 11 flight; informed—and full—accounts might have at least mentioned that the science of Apollo 11 could be performed by alternate transportation modes.

But is anyone so naïve as to believe that science or the quest for knowledge are the motivating forces behind the U.S. manned spaceflights? What then is? This is a question that might have properly been aired. David Satter, a young university graduate and former college newspaper editor, now a Rhodes scholar, watched all of CBS' coverage and came away with that question on his mind. Said Satter:

I took away the impression that CBS, despite its thorough job of reporting, had missed the point.... Everyone from Walter Schirra to Robert Heinlein, the science fiction writer, assumed that it was [significant], that it heralded the beginning of a new age. There was no one to answer questions like, can this feat yield any immediate benefits, and if not, how long will it be before any kind of return—other than a propaganda return—can be gained from this massive investment? Is it possible that we do not despite everything have the resources to follow up this project, that we cannot, in fact, finance every project that we are technologically capable of undertaking? And if we are not, how do we choose between projects? What are the differences between this exploration and famous explorations in the past? Does this trip not have a radically different *raison* than, say, Marco Polo's journey to China? It was questions like these that I felt were left unanswered in the adulation heaped on the astronauts, the space project, and the American common man....

In truth, air time and newspaper space were given to the critics of Apollo—who by and large were as simpleminded in their anti-Apollo arguments as the space boosters have been in their blue-sky declarations. It was almost too easy to go, as Jimmy Breslin did, to a New York City *barrio* while the men were walking on the moon and write about all the rats and overflowing garbage cans. That's what football pros call a "cheap shot." Breslin, as much as anybody, knows that the money cut from the space program by any presently imaginable U.S. Congress would not naturally flow into big-city ghettos. During Apollo 11 the whole space priorities vs. domestic priorities discussion became a kind of surrogate for the Larger Issues of the Nation—to no one's credit. Even on camera Walter Cronkite for some reason felt compelled to boost the program and to slam the young and the disaffected with: "I wonder what all those kids who pooh-poohed this program are saying now?" After listening to Cronkite, radical journalist Andrew Kopkind suggested that if the "kids" had any spirit left they would break into the CBS space simulation center at Grumman Aircraft in Bethpage, Long Island, and scream: "POOH POOH!"

"Pooh-pooh" suggests the level of banality reached by both the Apollo advocates and most of

its critics. It could have been an elevating and eventually a self-revealing week in the history of man's lurching attempts to understand his world and himself. But no one had the time or the inclination to approach meaningful material in a fresh way, to seriously consider, for example, the proposition: "We go to the moon because we want to, we don't fix the urban mess because we don't want to." The only thing I saw anywhere that came close was the CBS-TV program called *Nearer to Thee*? Physicist William Davidon, sculptor Richard Lippold, and theologian Rev. Theodore A. Gill, among others, met in an unadorned, unhocked-up CBS studio and, for a change, TV had something to say. Lest too many people hear it, it was at 10 a.m. Sunday EDT.

What will save the media from their own inadequacies during the next "story of the century?" Will anyone be prepared to do basic digging and clear interpretation? Who will even care? Certainly not shortsighted editors who offer official histories, or ratings-minded producers who perform as ringmasters for a Big Top on the tube, or reporters bereft of imagination who ask astronauts' wives "how do you feel now?" or journalists who see themselves as participants and allies of the Government. As veteran journalist James Cameron recently pointed out in the English weekly *New Statesmen*, the media used to be criticized for "sensationalism"—blowing up petty matters into big stories. Now, he says after watching the Apollo coverage, the charge is exactly the reverse—the media have succeeded in trivializing momentous stories. "The papers and the telly, confronted with genuinely significant and even vital events, reduce them intuitively to a sort of basic piffle . . . a level of numbing banality."

Few of the reporters who covered the flight in Houston were aware of this accusation. They were hearing somewhat sweeter thoughts from Wernher von Braun: "I would like to thank all of you for all of the fine support you have always given the program, because without public relations and good presentations of these programs to the public, we would have been unable to do it." The final apotheosis of the press: It has made the von Braun-NASA space team, and it is grovelingly grateful.

## The 'Life' contract with NASA: what price exclusivity?

"The *Life* contract sounds like a conflict of interest," says NASA public affairs administrator Julian Scheer, "but in my seven years here there has been no conflict." The contract between Field Enterprises, *Life*, and NASA astronauts for their "personal stories" has been a subject of continuing debate since the first agreement was announced in 1959. The central question has been the propriety of allowing government employees to sell, for personal profit, the stories of their personal experience while on tax-supported projects. Walter T. Bonney, at the time of the first contract the director of public information for NASA, was later to argue that there were ample precedents for the *Life* deal. The practice of selling wartime memoirs was a common one; the President of the United States himself, Mr. Eisenhower, had earned a reported \$476,000 through the sales and syndication of his book, *Crusade in Europe*.

In addition to the generalized rumblings, there were also some unanswered questions about specifics. What did "personal stories" mean? Air Force Lt. Col. John A. Powers, the Project Mercury public relations man, explained that the line between what *Life* owned and what the Government owned would be "drawn at the door" of each astronaut's house. The events of the flight, he said, would be in the public domain but the astronauts' reactions before and after the flight (presumably forever after) would constitute the "personal story" and would belong to *Life*. How much money was involved? For about two years the figure was not released and became a contentious issue between the astronauts and reporters. When it was finally revealed to be around \$500,000—or about \$70,000 per astronaut—there was sympathetic feeling that *Life* was being generous. But the magazine actually had managed quite adequately for itself. The contract gave to *Life* the world rights to the personal stories as well as to the "personal photographs." *Life* quickly sold, for handsome fees, overseas serialization rights to a European publisher, who in turn sold them to such publications as *Paris Match*.

Shortly after the Kennedy Administration came into office, White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger indicated that the selling of personal stories to magazines would not be permitted after expiration of *Life's* contract for Project Mercury. The position was believed to be consistent with the "ethical standards" policy set forth by Mr. Kennedy; under its terms, Presidential appointees were barred from receiving "compensation or anything of monetary value" for writing articles and making public appearances. In the summer of 1962, however, the White House decided this policy was not applicable to the astronauts, reportedly after the President had discussed the issue with John Glenn during a weekend of waterskiing.

A few weeks later, the space agency issued a three-page statement of "Policy Concerning Sale of Literary, Television, and Radio Rights, and Endorsement of Commercial Products by Astronauts." Its main point was a reconfirmation of the astronauts' freedom to "make agreements for the sale of stories of their personal experiences and those of their families. . . ." But such agreements were to be conditioned by a set of new rules to remove some of the odious hucksterism from the arrangements. No information about the flight programs was to be used in the personal stories, for example, unless it had already been made public during the flight or in news conferences shortly thereafter. Also, the contracting publisher was restrained from putting "exclusive" labels on the personal stories—as *Life* did—when they are in fact largely composed of information already published or available.

By the time the new policy was adopted, the number of astronauts had been increased to sixteen. The goals of the program had also expanded. Bidding for the personal accounts of these missions increased correspondingly. In February, 1963, the Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, a subsidiary of the Marshall Field publishing empire which produces *World Book Encyclopedia*, offered the sixteen astronauts \$3 million for their personal stories, plus another \$200,000 in fringe benefits, including \$100,000 life insurance policies for each astronaut.

In negotiations, the terms of the contract shrank from an original eight years to four years with option to renew. The Field representatives had proposed a flat fee plus a royalty arrangement: NASA officials felt that a flat fee only had more "dignity." A royalty arrangement, one official suggested, might encourage all concerned to do some sales work for the corporation. There was also legal sparring over a clause covering review of manuscripts. Finally, there was the question of "fair shares"—how were new astronauts to share in the money? After protracted negotiations, the Field group withdrew its offer, then reinstated it two months later, this time in partnership with *Life*, at a more modest \$1,040,000 for the literary rights only and for all the astronauts named. The offer was accepted.

The contract now in effect calls for \$200,000 a year to be divided among sixty-two astronauts and astronauts' widows—approximately \$3,000 per man. But this will be supplemented by royalties from a book based on the Apollo moonflights, to be signed by the astronauts. That, plus overseas sales of the story, could earn some astronauts as much as \$16,000 more a year.

Was the commercial aspect of man's epochal space adventure a mistake? The *Life* contract is up for renewal in 1970. If it was indeed a mistake, then that is the earliest time that it can be rectified.

E.D.

Last year's teachers' strikes deeply divided New York City.  
How the media were manipulated; the bitter residue.

## New York's black anti-semitism scare

FRED FERRETTI

To many Jews, the school strike and related troubles were evidence that [Mayor] Lindsay was willing to do anything to placate black militants, even those with anti-Semitic leanings, and even if it meant damaging the educational system.

—*Time*, Oct. 3, 1969

As Mayor Lindsay moved to the lectern in the auditorium of Congregational Beth Shalom . . . the Meshugeneh Brigade of the Jewish Defense League was there . . . the eyes as wild as those of any crowd on a Mississippi road.

—*New York Post*,  
(Pete Hamill)  
Oct. 8, 1969

■ It is provable that anti-white sentiment exists among black people in the United States. It is demonstrable in New York City and in other urban centers that this anti-white disposition contains a component of anti-Semitism. What is debatable is its depth.

Black anti-Semitism was an abstraction, a sometime issue—in New York City, at any rate—until last year, when the city prepared to commit itself to decentralization of its public school system and to experiment with limited community control of local school boards. Then a critical mass of volatile elements suddenly was brought together: a union of 57,000 teachers, an organization of 6,000 school principals and administrators, and a Board of Education hierarchy, all largely Jewish and all dedicated essentially to the maintenance

of the status quo of the nation's largest educational system; a strong feeling in the city's liberal community that something had to be done about the schools' mediocrity; an experimental school district in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville section of Brooklyn in which virtually all of the students were either black or Puerto Rican; in which the district superintendent Rhody McCoy was black, and in which four principals were black, one was Puerto Rican, and another Chinese.

Tensions created by the decision to give blacks limited control over one aspect of their lives—the education of their children—led first to a walkout of 350 union teachers from Ocean Hill-Brownsville in Spring 1968, and subsequently to three citywide strikes by most of the United Federation of Teachers and the Council of Supervisory Associations. For two months—thirty-nine school days—between September 9 and November 18 last year, the city's 900 schools were closed and 1.1 million pupils were without teachers. During that time opponents of the educational experiment needed something to demonstrate that it couldn't work, something to obscure the educational nature of the experiment. Black anti-Semitism became that "something." It was an issue fearful enough to make the liberal group which favored educational reform back away. It was, moreover, an issue which, once discovered by the UFT and its president, Albert Shanker, could be neutralized only by an alert and responsible press. As we

Fred Ferretti, former WNBC-TV newsman in New York City, now is on the staff of the *New York Times*.

shall see, however, the communications media in most cases repeated docilely the utterances of the sowers of hate; they merely recorded hysterical accusations usually made just prior to deadline, giving them credence beyond what they deserved; and in general they failed to hold the accusers accountable for their words and their deeds.

Albert Shanker began his campaign to discredit the experiment in education quite early. On February 6 of last year, the UFT president was quoted by the *Times* as being concerned that teachers were "becoming targets of a mounting volume of attacks by extremist groups." On February 12 in the *Times* Shanker was quoted as saying that "a sort of hoodlum element" had gained control over several schools, including several in the experimental district there, and that this was the sort of thing that could be expected under the city's decentralization proposal. By May 10, after nineteen educators had been ordered transferred out of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district, he changed the code words to say, according to the press, that teachers in the Ocean Hill schools were being made victims of a "kind of vigilante activity." Four days later the media relayed the report that children of the district were chanting "Black Power slogans." On May 20, the *Times* quoted Shanker as saying "forty outsiders" from Harlem and other parts of the city had "come in and taken over" the Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools.

Five days later, Dr. Kenneth Clark, a sociologist and a member of the state Board of Regents, accused Shanker of lobbying with tactics that "bordered on the irresponsible" to get decentralization killed by the state legislature, and he charged further that the UFT president "promoted anti-Semitism in the Negro community." (Shanker eventually was successful in Albany; the legislature refused to enact a decentralization bill, in effect saying let's leave things as they are.) And on June 3, with the Ocean Hill-Brownsville dispute more than three weeks old, the *Times* reported Shanker as declaring, "even if the dispute were somehow resolved within the next week, the kind of hatred that's been engendered there is something that takes a cooling off period."

Through the summer the UFT remained strident, and on September 1, the union voted to strike. That day Shanker said, according to the *Times*, that allowing local boards to hire and dismiss teachers would "open up a field day for bigots and racists." When, one week later, a black UFT teacher at a delegate assembly meeting said that the strike could be interpreted as nothing else but a vote against the black community, the *Times* printed Shanker's most revealing answer: "This is a strike that will protect black teachers against white racists, and white teachers against black racists." His implication was clear, and the cheers of the assembled teachers proved they had gotten the message. Several days later Shanker added, again as reported in the *Times*, that the strike was "not a matter of black or white" because the "union would be there" to oppose white racism, too, if it should arise. And later he declared that if a white school were to oust a Negro principal or Negro teachers "then we will be back here again fighting their battle."

On September 13, the UFT ran an ad in the *Times*, signed by Shanker, which said that when the teachers in question in Ocean Hill-Brownsville tried to get back into the schools there, "an organized mob tried to prevent them from returning." The ad advertised a rally against "mob rule." Three days after the ad, Shanker, on *Searchlight*, a WNBC-TV Sunday morning public affairs show, said that he thought some element of anti-Semitism was involved in the opposition to the reinstatement of the teachers. This followed a union demand for the removal of "extremist teachers" who were reported to be inciting "bands of youths" to violence; and the Association of Assistant Superintendents' going on record as requesting a special legislative session to investigate "all aspects of the work stoppage and the unlawful actions of extremist groups occurring in the New York Schools."

The strike was page one news from the outset. It was certainly the first item—and often the entire first half—of evening TV news programs. *Time* and *Newsweek* began sending reporting teams to Ocean Hill-Brownsville. To their credit, both dealt perceptively with the educational aspects of the district as well as with the conflict

and the burgeoning issue of black anti-Semitism. But Shanker continued to get the most space, throwing terms such as "extremists" and "vigilantes" at every opportunity. There was never, so far as can be determined, a sustained attempt to force him to define them. The TV and radio newscasters seemed content to label anybody in any experimental school district as "black militant." And yet there was Shanker quoted without argument, pleading, according to the *Times* of September 22, not to make the school strike "a racial conflict," and, three days later when a settlement was proposed, saying, "this means putting teachers in a room with Sonny Carson and the Panthers." (Robert "Sonny" Carson, chairman of Independent Brooklyn CORE, more than once worried teachers in Ocean Hill-Brownsville but he was no more an object of terror than were the Black Panthers, who wear machine gun bullets around their necks and are useful to scare people with.)

I recall a Shanker press conference I attended as a reporter for WNBC-TV. It was held at UFT headquarters, late in the afternoon as usual. During his customary round of charges, the UFT president alleged that city employees had abetted harassment of teachers in the experimental district. With the camera rolling, I asked Shanker for the names or name of the employees or employee to which he referred. He answered:

"You know who they are."

I said I didn't, and since he was making the charge he should be prepared to identify the alleged culprit.

"You know who they are," he repeated. "Look at your film."

I again said I didn't know, and I asked again who they were. Once again, he said, "You know who they are."

The colloquy was repeated several times over. I did not get an answer. That evening, after some prodding by me, WNBC-TV used that film clip. But there was no real media effort to make Shanker more circumspect in subsequent press conferences. Indeed, on September 26, he was quoted as asking his union to dig in on the strike because he wanted "to see if there are enough people with guts to stand up to vigilantes." That

same day, Luis Fuentes, principal of one of the Ocean Hill schools and the only Puerto Rican principal in the entire school system, said that when there was talk about "prejudice, racism, hatred, Mr. Shanker, I don't have to turn around to see where the heavy boot is."

As the strike began its second month, Christian Herter, Jr., chairman of the New York Urban Coalition, pleaded for settlement "in the interest of peace and racial harmony." He added, "the harm being done to our children is immense and the damage to harmonious race relations in the city incalculable." And on October 10, the New York Civil Liberties Union issued

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*"The media in most cases  
repeated docilely the  
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of hate."*

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an investigative report entitled *The Burden of Blame*, the thesis of which was that Albert Shanker, the UFT, and the Board of Education had systematically tried to "sabotage" the experimental school program. It received scant attention, except in Harlem's weekly *Amsterdam News*, which printed the full text serially. (Ironically the report was bigger news early this year when dissident members of the NYCLU protested it as political and pressed for and got an intra-NYCLU debate on whether it should have been issued.)

Early in the school confrontation Jewish organizations had preached restraint, as was their tradition. Walter Karp and H. R. Shapiro, in *The Public Life*, [Feb. 19, 1969] detail, for example, that in 1966 an American Jewish Congress spokesman had derisively coined the phrase "Jewish backlash"; had denounced tales of black anti-Semitism as "overblown"; and had instead emphasized "the strong identification Negroes have with Jews." In October, 1967, the National Community Relations Council, represent-

ing many Jewish groups, had warned Jews not to mistake black "legitimate protest" for anti-Semitism. And a month later the Union of Hebrew Congregations had urged "the exercise of moral pressure by the congregations and the rabbis upon those Jewish slumlords and ghetto profiteers." That same year, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith reported that a five-year study of black attitudes had shown blacks to be the least anti-Semitic group in the country, and further, that the more militant a black man was, the less likely he was to be anti-Jewish. As late as October 23, 1968, the ADL was reporting that its study of anti-Jewish leaflets distributed in the school dispute had proved them to be crudely done, sporadically produced, and not the product of any organized effort.

But the pendulum had begun to swing the other way just one day earlier, on October 22. Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, national director of interreligious affairs of the American Jewish Committee, at a WCBS *World of Religion* taping session with the Ocean Hill-Brownsville governing board chairman, the Rev. C. Herbert Oliver, was reported in the *Times* to have said that the UFT and Shanker were "using the Jewish community" in what was essentially "a labor-management problem." Chairman Oliver maintained that anti-Semitism had been made an issue in the dispute by Shanker; Rabbi Tannenbaum, in addition to his charge against the UFT, urged black leaders to "take a position against anti-Semitism unleashed from outside the community." The next day's *Times* reported that Rabbi Tannenbaum had been quoted incorrectly by the Associated Press, and instead of criticizing Shanker and the UFT the rabbi had referred to extremist elements on both sides of the dispute. Then on October 25, the *Times* reported that Rabbi Tannenbaum, based on the transcript of the radio program, had indeed charged the UFT with manipulation and had been quoted properly.

The *Long Island Press*, meanwhile, had carried a story that the Mayor had met with representatives of five Jewish organizations and requested support, saying in effect, "You Jews have made me use up all my Negro credit cards." The organizations deplored the *Press* article for what

they called distortion of "a meeting held for constructive purposes [that] is being used to inflame racial and religious tensions in our city." The *Times* reported the *Press* article, along with the organizations' denials that the meeting had been called to get them to "control" Shanker and his union. The *Times* also stated that the article had been reproduced "anonymously" in handbill form. I saw it being given out by striking teachers in Queens.

This was but one of scores of leaflets, many if not all of them reproduced and distributed—in one case the UFT says as "a public service"—by the United Federation of Teachers. The leaflet which most community control opponents use as a ghastly example reprints the masthead of Cowles Communications' *Education News* [see page 23]. It includes a picture of a teacher, Leslie Campbell, a member of the African-American Teachers Association, who was accused of anti-Semitism during and after the strike. Campbell, in a lesson plan, is discussing the concept of black power. The leaflet calls it "Preaching Violence Instead of Teaching Children in Ocean Hill-Brownsville (An observation of an Actual 'Lesson' in JHS 271)," and goes on to say that

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*"And yet there was Shanker,  
quoted without argument,  
pleading not to have  
'racial conflict'."*

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"this excerpt is one example of what the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Governing Board feels is suitable curriculum for the children in that district."

The fact is that the lesson did not take place in Ocean Hill-Brownsville as the leaflet says. The date of the magazine was omitted—it was October 30, 1967, one year earlier—when Campbell was a teacher not in Ocean Hill, but at JHS 35, in quite another school district. The UFT claim that the lesson is an example of Ocean Hill curriculum is, according to the New York Civil Liberties

Union, "a conclusion based on an untruthful premise." This leaflet was composed and distributed by the UFT.

The second example consists of two leaflets devised by the Council of Supervisory Associations. They concern an evening adult program to be given in JHS 271. One is signed by the CSA, the other by the supervisors of District 29 in Queens. The latter depicts a skeleton in cap and gown holding a cocked pistol. Readers are asked, "Do You Approve New Community Curriculum?" Both score an adult program with courses in revolution, staging of demonstrations, and self-defense. Both imply that racists and extremists were operating the Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools.

Yet the facts are that local school officials had nothing to do with the programs, nor did the central Board of Education, which the CSA says "approved" the program. In a court case in which the New York Civil Liberties Union represented William Buckley against Hunter College, it was ruled that the content of an extracurricular program is not a valid basis for denying an organization the right to use public facilities. The CSA, the NYCLU pointed out, is composed of people "regularly involved in arranging for the use of school facilities by outside groups" and should have been aware of the facts, but, says the NYCLU, the "leaflets have systematically slandered Ocean Hill-Brownsville in a smear campaign reminiscent of Joe McCarthy."

There were other UFT leaflets. One said, "The issue in Ocean Hill-Brownsville is the violent, disruptive activity of a group of militants, including teacher partisans, who have made a shambles of education by harassing and intimidating UFT teachers, subjecting them to degrading vilification and preventing them from teaching." Another states in large type, **IN THREE DAYS YOU WILL BE DEAD**, and attributes this quotation to "a non-union teacher at JHS 271." The rest of the leaflet is a series of "quotations" from "McCoy teachers . . . documented . . . by eyewitnesses." It goes on to warn, "Your School Can Be Next!!!"

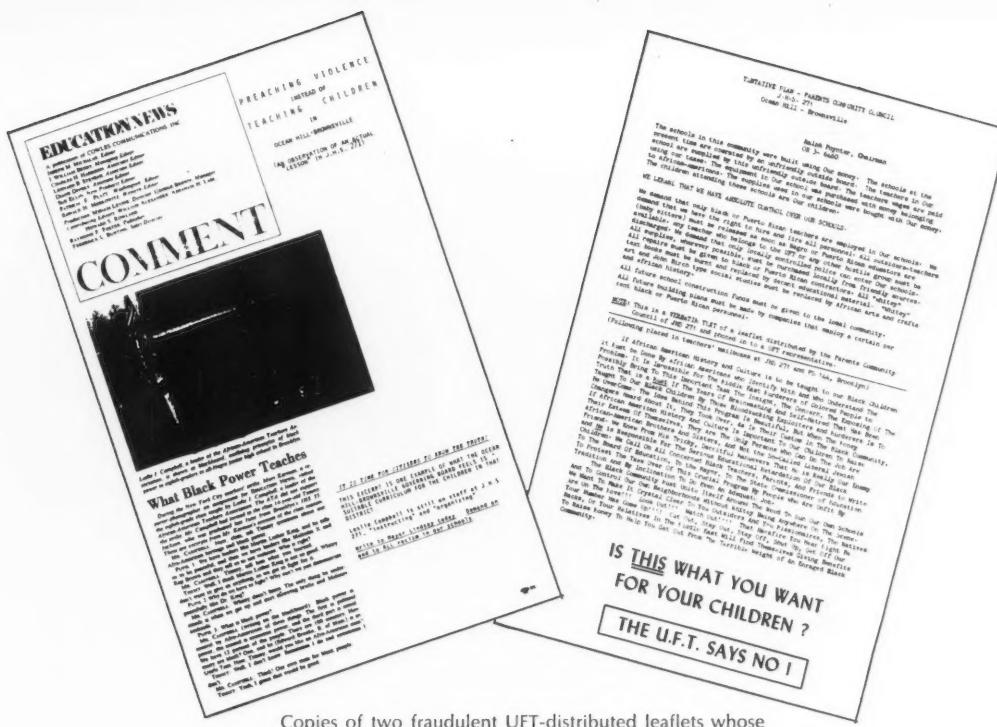
The UFT never identified the teacher, nor produced eyewitnesses. The NYCLU concluded:

It is of course difficult to know how to check such a leaflet; how do you investigate anonymous statements produced by unnamed informants? However, the frauds contained in those leaflets which do contain information that can be checked make us very skeptical about the UFT's contentions in this particular leaflet. Seen in the context of the UFT's strategy of lying and distorting in order to whip the city into a frenzy of fear of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, this leaflet emerges as yet another element of that strategy.

Finally, there is what has come to be known as the "Ralph Poynter" leaflet. Entitled *Tentative Plan—Parents Community Council, JHS 271, Ocean Hill-Brownsville*, it is actually two leaflets put together, printed, and distributed by the UFT. The top half [see illustration] is a demand for "absolute" black control of "our schools," and, according to a UFT note, "is a VERBATIM TEXT of a leaflet distributed by the Parents Community Council of JHS 271 and phoned in to a UFT representative." The second half of the leaflet, which according to the UFT was "placed in teachers' mailboxes at JHS 271 and PS 144," is violently anti-Semitic, speaking of "Middle East Murderers of Colored People" and "Bloodsucking Exploiters."

The fact is that there was no such organization as the Parents Community Council of JHS 271; the alleged "chairman," Ralph Poynter, was a Manhattan teacher who had no connection with Ocean Hill-Brownsville; the phone number listed was an Oregon number, in Manhattan. When it was dialed, it was found to be disconnected. At the bottom of the leaflet the UFT asserted it was distributed by the "Parents Community Council"—which did not exist. It does not say who "phoned in" the "verbatim text." The anti-Semitic second half is anonymous, and attempts to determine its authorship were unsuccessful. The UFT, concluded the NYCLU, "perpetrated a multiple fraud." That it also perpetrated hatred is borne out by the NYCLU report that among the hundreds of calls it received, most cited this leaflet as evidence that Ralph Poynter was an anti-Semitic official of Ocean Hill-Brownsville.

The UFT made much of the fact that leaflets "were placed in teachers' mailboxes." That is



Copies of two fraudulent UFT-distributed leaflets whose charges were publicized but whose origins never were fully investigated by the press: (left) purported reprint from *Education News*; (right) "Tentative Plan, JHS 271 Parents Community Council."

true—but the implication that the local board knew and approved of it is false. The fact is that they were placed anonymously, and subsequently deplored by the local school board. It said:

The Ocean Hill-Brownsville Governing Board, as well as the entire Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration School District, has never tolerated anti-Semitism in any form. Anti-Semitism has no place in our hearts or minds and indeed never in our schools. While certain anti-Semitic literature may have been distributed outside our school buildings, there is absolutely no connection between these acts and the thoughts and intents of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Governing Board. We disclaim any responsibility for this literature and have in every way sought to find its source and take appropriate action to stop it.

Charles Isaacs, 22, one of the young new teachers who went to Ocean Hill-Brownsville to teach mathematics, wrote in the *Times Magazine* of Sunday, November 24:

I read in the UFT literature and in the Jewish press about "black racism," but I have never experienced it in Ocean Hill, and, to my knowledge, neither has anyone else on the faculty. While the storm rages around Ocean Hill-Brownsville, it is not *about* Ocean Hill-Brownsville. But one fact of life does stand out: This issue of anti-Semitism, true or false, preys on the fears of the one ethnic group that, united behind it, could destroy us; if this happens, I expect a real problem of black anti-Semitism, and the cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy will be complete.

Eugenia Kemble wrote this:

One thing people seem to agree on at PS 144 in Ocean Hill-Brownsville is that black anti-Semitism is not a part of the thinking of the school's staff or its students' parents. In fact, most of the teachers, administrators, and parents of that school do not believe that the city-wide discussion being carried on over the issue by the press, city officials, and others is taking a hard or deep enough look at grass-roots black opinion on the subject.

Who is Eugenia Kemble? She is assistant editor of *The United Teacher*—the official newspaper of the UFT. Her article, entitled “Black Anti-Semitism Seen as EXAGGERATED ISSUE by Parents and Staff of Ocean Hill School,” appeared long after the strike—on March 12, 1969—but nonetheless Shanker protested it. In the March 23, 1969, issue of *The United Teacher*, he wrote, “When a full page is devoted to such a piece by a UFT staff member, it inevitably leads our members and all readers to believe that the article represents official UFT policy—which it does not.” He went on to repeat his extravagances against the school district and to criticize Miss Kemble’s news-gathering technique.

The NYCLU, after its study of the hate literature was concluded, said “the UFT leadership, and in particular Albert Shanker, systematically accused the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Board and Rhody McCoy of anti-Semitism and extremism, and then ‘proved’ those accusations only with half-truths, innuendoes, and outright lies.” It said further “that the joint UFT-CSA effort to make Ocean Hill-Brownsville appear to be a haven for terrorism was in sharp conflict with the actual facts.”

In October, the NYCLU released its critique of the leaflets. The only reference to it was three paragraphs in the jump of a page one *Times* story, which concerned yet another day of fruitless negotiations. The three paragraphs were in the last part of the story and quoted NYCLU associate director Ira Glasser as charging the UFT with being the “major source of extremist leaflets” being circulated.

Interestingly, Aryeh Neier, executive director of the NYCLU, had become concerned, he said, when his eight-year-old son had come home from his school in Greenwich Village clutching one of the Poynter leaflets. The NYCLU research into the leaflets was reported to an aide to Mayor Lindsay, together with a suggestion that an investigation be undertaken. The aide suggested that Neier write a letter of request to the Mayor. He did. A Special Committee on Racial and Religious Prejudice, chaired by Bernard Botein, presiding justice of the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court, was formed by the Mayor,

with the staff of the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, under general counsel Arnold Forster, as the committee’s investigative arm.

The Botein Committee investigated for two months, and as it did, Shanker kept the pressure on. When Dr. Clark accused him of making a “flagrant appeal to backlash,” Shanker ignored him. When Whitney Young, executive director of the Urban League, was quoted in the *Times* as accusing Shanker of “plunging the city into racial strife,” the UFT president said merely that it was a “vile smear.” When a UFT vice president, John O’Neill, asked the union to discharge Shanker because he was guilty of “the most vicious

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*“I asked Shanker for the names. . . . He answered, ‘You know who they are.’”*

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racial demagogic ever seen in this city,” Shanker replied with, “It’s mostly sour grapes on his part. He doesn’t represent anybody.” (O’Neill soon became an ex-vice president, when he was stripped of his union position and salary by the UFT in a “reorganization.”)

Finally in late November the school strike ended. But the Botein Committee kept delving. And on November 22, during the first week of school after the strike, Shanker was quoted by the *Times* as saying, “large numbers of children” at JHS 271 “have been indoctrinated, they are full of hate.” By December 2, according to Shanker in the *Times*, groups of “especially trained” JHS 271 students were intimidating and harassing union teachers.

In a December 3 *Times* story covering the removal by the state of Ocean Hill-Brownsville district trustee Herbert F. Johnson—an appointment of a trustee had been one of the terms of the strike settlement—it was reported that “a state observer” had said Dr. Johnson had been locked in a closet by persons who objected to his attempts to oversee JHS 271 in the district. The story quoted Shanker as having been informed that Dr. Johnson had been “physically threatened

at knife point" by someone in a group when, at one stage, he had ordered the school shut down for the day. The notice of the closet and knife incidents were in paragraph twelve of a forty-four-paragraph story, at the top of the jump from page one. The next day, the following paragraph appeared in a lengthy *Times* report: "Dr. Johnson flatly denied the report of his having been locked in a closet. He said that if he had been threatened with a knife he did not know about it, and added that he had no idea how the report originated." That story, which began on page one, had sixty-one paragraphs; Dr. Johnson's denial was the last paragraph.

On January 17, 1969, the Botein Committee surfaced with a report that "an appalling amount of racial prejudice—black and white—in New York City" had arisen "in and about the school controversy." The Committee had been given a NYCLU memorandum detailing its information on the leaflets, their origin, and their distribution. What did it say of these?

The Committee has decided against incorporating in this statement copies of or excerpts from any of the bigoted printed matter which has been distributed during the course of the school dispute—because we see no constructive purpose served in thus adding to the circulation of such material. Similarly, the Committee has decided against naming blameworthy individuals or organizations in this statement because none of them has been asked to appear before the Committee to testify.

The Committee so decided despite a mandate from the Mayor to include in its report "a chronology of the school dispute, including the factors and actions which led to the appearance of religious or racial bigotry; available information regarding the sources and distributions of such printed matter." Then, six days later, on January 23, Arnold Forster and the Botein Committee's ADL staff issued an ADL report, and it was not restrained:

The use of anti-Semitism—raw, undisguised—has distorted the fundamental character of the controversy surrounding the public schools of New York City. The anti-Semitism has gone unchecked by public authorities for two and a half years, reaching a peak during the school strike of Sep-

tember-November 1968 and in the post-strike period. It is still going on.

Furthermore, the report said, anti-Semitic acts were "perpetrated largely by black extremists," and anti-Semitism's "growth has been aided by the failure of city and state public officials to condemn it swiftly and strongly enough, and to remove from positions of authority those who have utilized anti-Semitism." Specifically charged

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*"The question now is what lessons have been learned, and which will be applied?"*

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were the African-American Teachers Association; its president, Albert Vann; Leslie Campbell; and Luis Fuentes. The Board of Education and two of its past presidents, Lloyd Garrison and John Doar, were charged with passivity in the face of anti-Semitic outbursts. Cited was an editorial from the *African-American Teachers Forum*, which in effect calls Jews the exploiters of black and Puerto Rican children. Also cited was a poem read over station WBAI and dedicated to Albert Shanker. [See page 28.]

But the report failed to say why men like Vann or Campbell became prominent. Who created them? More, who created the climate in which they were allowed to grow? And should not Forster have included not only Albert Vann's anti-Semitism, but also a paragraph from the editorial which said in part: "It is time to declare that Albert Shanker and all who support his racist diatribes do a disservice to the entire Jewish community." Would it have not been more responsible to have included not just Campbell's poetry reading, but part of the radio discussion which accompanied it?

The media made the Campbell poem page one news, and the climate of the city was such that the Board of Education, the Mayor, and some editorialists were soon asking for Campbell to be banished—anywhere. There was never, so far as

I can determine, any effort to show in what context the poem was read. It was certainly anti-Semitic, but then Julius Lester, who moderated the WBAI program, is not "Adolph Hitler" or a "Nazi" as certain UFT and Jewish Defense League posters claimed. And, oddly, there was never a transcript of the program on which the poem was read. Nobody requested one, according to WBAI spokesman Frank Milspaugh, until I asked for a tape and made a transcript.

In all, forty-three separate instances of what the ADL defines as anti-Semitic conduct were listed. The report was widely publicized, and since the ADL has long been the official delineator of what constitutes anti-Semitism, it was widely accepted. In view of that, two critiques are particularly instructive. One is by Leonard J. Fein, associate director and director of research for the Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies and also chairman of the Commission on Community Interrelations of the American Jewish Congress. Fein recognizes, he says, that anti-Semitism among blacks is a painful and most sensitive issue. Accordingly, he says, it should be dealt with carefully and precisely. What is needed, he wrote to Arnold Forster on February 6 of this year, is not "a continuation of the vague but panicked rhetoric which has marked so much of the debate," and of which the ADL report "is an example . . . which exacerbates an already volatile issue." He then said this of the report:

It fails to distinguish between gutter anti-Semitism—epithets and obscenities from the mouths of a mob . . . and the statements of public men; it equates vulgar imprecation and sophisticated if specious reasoning; it neglects entirely the counter-provocations which, though they can never justify anti-Semitism, at least help to explain it. As a result, it does not contribute to either understanding or constructive action; it merely inflames. . . . Where, for example, we are informed that "a demonstrator was heard to shout . . ." we can hardly conclude that the unnamed demonstrator was an extremist. Yet, of the forty-three instances, even if all are accepted as in fact anti-Semitic:

*Four* surround the Metropolitan Museum of Art controversy, noting the names of Messrs. [Thomas] Hoving, [Francis] Plimpton, and [William] Booth and Miss [Candice] Van Elliston, none normally considered a black extremist;

*Four* report the opposition of unnamed black students and parents to the cancellation of school holidays in the settlement of the strike;

*Three* are the work of white extremists: Messrs. [Harold] Koppersmith, [John] Lawrence, and [James] Madole;

*Five* describe anti-Semitic outbursts during the strike by unnamed pickets;

*Two* describe anti-Semitic remarks by unnamed persons at district meetings on decentralization;

*Five* are quotes from leaflets, authors unknown.

This, wrote Fein, adds up to twenty-three, which leaves twenty, "including a number involving the same people and a number not clearly anti-Semitic." He further accuses the ADL of "gratuitous slurs," and criticizes the UFT circulation of that "particularly scurrilous leaflet." He concludes by calling for repair of whatever rupture exists between the Jew and the black man, and for "research and investigation" which "would emphasize both causes and productive solutions."

Fein's analysis has received no public circulation.

The other criticism of the ADL report was written by Henry Schwarzchild, currently a fellow at the Metropolitan Applied Research Center; a member of the Commission on Religion and Race of the Synagogue Council of America; former executive director of the Lawyers Constitutional Defense Committee; and, from 1962 to 1964, National Publications Director of the ADL. Schwarzchild's study is entitled "An Anti-Semitic Herring." Although private, it has been

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*"This issue of anti-Semitism, true or false, preys on fears. . . that could destroy us."*

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circulated among Jewish organizations in recent months, and has earned him, he says, the honor of "being denied access to the ADL offices" here. He begins his critique with a quotation, uttered only a year ago, by Benjamin Epstein, national

director of the ADL: ". . . the Jewish Community would be well advised . . . to drop pre-occupation with Negro anti-Semitism, which only serves to divert energies from the civil rights struggle." Then he states:

Two considerations come immediately to mind from the face of this report. One is that if the ADL's research had been able [to locate] twenty more such anti-Semitic statements or incidents, we should assuredly have had a report cataloguing sixty rather than forty items. . . . The second striking aspect is that the ADL's general counsel and fact-finding staff had just served immediately prior . . . as the research staff of the Botein Commission, in which capacity they had had submitted to them a wealth of material not only on anti-Semitic statements and incidents in the city but about anti-black, racist ones as well.

He hypothesizes that had the ADL put its staff to work cataloguing anti-black racist remarks made in New York during the "past two and a half years by whites (or by Jews)" then it could "hardly be doubted that such a recital would comprise not twenty-five pages and forty incidents . . . but literally thousands of statements and incidents, some overt and raw as the anti-Semitic ones, some disguised and half-cooked, couched in the Aesopian language in which this society talks about race."

One needs only to remember the patently racist remarks of United Federation of Teachers President Albert Shanker . . . or teachers and supervisors screaming "nigger lover" at parents and children who crossed the UFT picket lines. . . . One might also remember that the black community of this city lives not with forty or so offensive incidents but with some 120,000 New Yorkers who voted for George Wallace. . . .

Schwarzchild asks, if the ADL did not see fit to include instances of anti-black sentiment, why has some black organization not done so? His answer:

Negroes are not interested in a nosecounting contest with the ADL over which minority group has suffered more verbal assault, even though they could win this sad competition hands down. Negroes are now struggling to end the oppressive

force over them of fundamentally racist liberal institutions of the society. It is *liberal racism* that is the enemy. And this produces puzzlement, discomfiture, and resentment among liberals, intellectuals, and in the Jewish community. . . .

The ADL report should have comforted everyone who was concerned with an apparent rise in the noise level of Negro anti-Semitism. To find forty anti-Semitic incidents in two and a half years in a city of 1.2 million Negroes and almost 2 million Jews, beset with a multitude of social, racial, and class problems that make for some inevitable friction between ethnic groups, that is a surprising datum of relative tranquility. . . .

Racism is rampant in this community. But those who suffer most massively from its effects are not the Jewish community but the nonwhite minority groups. . . .

Henry Schwarzchild wrote his critique on February 3. It has never been circulated. Ironically, when one looks at the *Times* just one day before that, there again is Albert Shanker, with UFT contract time coming up, talking of the "alliance" that was against him in the school dispute. This included, he said, "black separatists, the Students for a Democratic Society, the lawyers association [sic], and white liberals who are racists because they always say yes to black demands." And in April there was a principal, Abraham Lass, chairman of the committee on student unrest of the High School Principals Association, quoted as declaring that "fear and chaos are in the saddle" in the city's schools; and Albert Shanker claiming that Mayor Lindsay's handling of the strike had brought the city to a "point of racial warfare."

The pattern to these events now is evident, as is their portrayal by the media. One can point to distinguished individual performances: for example, analytical stories by Fred Hechinger in the *New York Times*; an earnest October 23, 1968, effort by *Times* reporter Bill Kovach to dissect the anti-Jewish feeling among blacks; and several of the *Times'* editorials. Nat Hentoff's writings in the *Village Voice* were passionate and relevant, as were Jason Epstein's in the *New York Review of Books*. Columnist Murray Kempton in the *New York Post* was an oasis of reason amid the general shrillness of that paper's daily coverage (the reporting of Kenneth Gross ex-

cepted). The *Daily News* saw little need to discuss issues when there was so much juicy confrontation to report on.

I. F. Stone, in his *Weekly* of November 4, 1968, did a remarkable job of delineating the fakery of black anti-Semitism. "John V. Lindsay," he wrote, "is in trouble because he suddenly finds himself Mayor of a Southern town." Sol Stern in *Ramparts* did a fine, sympathetic report on the new, young teachers who went out to work in the experimental schools. And there was a biting series of editorials entitled "A Divided City," on WCBS-TV. But except for these, efforts at analysis on radio and TV were sorry. Each day the airwaves were filled with the catch phrases—"black militants," "extremists," and "outsiders." TV's concept of objective coverage was to read the *Times*, discover the day's issue, get a UFT spokesman, then a spokesman for the beleagured schools, and have them speak to the issue. It dwelt only on confrontation. Radio reporting was the same, except for WCBS' Ed Bradley.

There was, with the predictable exception of Harlem's *Amsterdam News*, no *real* effort made to present the black man's side of the conflict. A confidential report done for the New School for Social Research's Urban Reporting Project has disclosed that community people most affected by the strike thought that media coverage was superficial; that it did not delve; that it lacked objectivity; that it distorted. Certainly there was no follow-up effort to fix responsibility in the UFT for vicious and fraudulent leaflets *circulated under its auspices*. Was any official disciplined for his acts? Were there grounds for prosecution? Is not the same UFT pamphleteering machinery intact today?

The pattern, then, is one of sobering shortcomings in media initiative and perspective, one which demonstrates the frightening ease with which clever demagogues can manipulate a sensitive issue in a vast metropolis—one, in short, which should discomfit all media in the media capital of the nation. The question now is what lessons have been learned, and which will be applied? Surely the answer cannot be "none." For the lessons are too clear to be missed—and the social cost of ignoring them is far too high.

### The WBAI Incident

□ Last January 15, the public relations director of the United Federation of Teachers, in one of a series of actions to draw attention to comments made to the modest-size audience of station WBAI-FM, filed a complaint with the FCC about the station's "Julius Lester" program of December 26, 1968. The portion of the program in question, an interview with controversial Leslie Campbell—one of 57,000 New York City public school teachers—follows:

Vann: I also brought with me some works by a young sister in Brooklyn who is fifteen years old ... a sister by the name of Thea Behran. She has written a poem about anti-Semitism and she dedicates this poem to Albert Shanker, and the name of this is "Anti-Semitism":

Hey, Jew boy, with that yarmulka on your head  
You pale faced Jew boy—I wish you were dead  
I can see you Jew boy—no you can't hide  
I got a scoop on you—yeh, you gonna die  
I'm sick of your stuff  
Every time I turn 'round—you pushin' my head  
into the ground  
I'm sick of hearing about your suffering  
in Germany  
I'm sick about your escape from tyranny  
I'm sick of seeing in everything I do  
About the murder of 6 million Jews  
Hitler's reign lasted for only fifteen years  
For that period of time you shed crocodile tears  
My suffering lasted for over 400 years, Jew boy  
And the white man only let me play with his toys  
Jew boy, you took my religion and adopted it for  
you  
But you know that black people were the original  
Hebrews  
When the U.N. made Israel a free independent  
State  
Little four and five-year-old boys threw hand-  
grenades  
They hated the black Arabs with all their might  
And you, Jew boy, said it was all right  
Then you came to America, land of the free  
And took over the school system to perpetrate  
white supremacy  
Guess you know, Jew boy, there's only one reason  
you made it  
You had a clean white face, colorless, and faded  
I hated you Jew boy, because your hangup was  
the Torah  
And my only hangup was my color.

Lester: I had you read that in the full knowledge, of course, that probably one half of WBAI's subscribers will immediately cancel their subscriptions to the station, and to all sorts of other things because of the sentiments expressed in that particular poem; but nonetheless, I wanted you to read it because she expresses ... how she feels....

Campbell: I'm glad you said that, man, because some of our listeners are going to get hung up on discussing that and they are going to say that that is anti-Semitism, etc. but I don't think that

is the question. . . .

(Campbell reads another poem, "Day and Night." He comments that "when people begin to hear the young people they will realize there is no way they can put a gag in the mouth of black people." Then the segment begins in which listeners phone in questions and observations.)

*Listener:* That was a very ugly poem. What was it about the poem that made you feel we should have heard it? It aroused anger in me.

*Lester:* People should listen to what a young black woman is expressing. I hope that will properly cause people to do some self-examination and react as you have reacted. An ugly poem, yes, but not one half as ugly as what happened in school strikes, not one one-hundredth as bad as what some teachers said to some of those black children. I would hope that you would not have the automatic reaction, but raise a few questions inside yourself. I had it read over the air because I felt that what she said was valid for a lot of black people, and I think it's time that people stop being afraid of it and stop being hysterical about it. . . .

(Listeners discuss other comments on the program.)

*Listener:* With all of this discussion about racism and the difference between black and white, doesn't it make it hard for a decent person to contact or communicate with a black person?

*Lester:* All black people are saying is, if there is going to be communication between black people, our point of view and our attitudes are going to be a major consideration. In the past they have not been because we have kept quiet, and now we are saying it's a two-way street, and you have to at least come one half way on our terms. The question is not one of communication but one of justice for black people. . . .

On March 26, FCC Secretary Ben Waple communicated to the UFT the Commission's decision: that WBAI had "fulfilled its obligation imposed by the fairness doctrine to afford reasonable opportunity for the presentation of conflicting viewpoints" [FCC Reports 69-302]. In its review of the case, the Commission quoted these statements of Julius Lester on a January 30, 1969, program:

I'm willing to admit that anti-Semitism is a vile phenomenon. It's a phenomenon which I don't totally understand as it has existed in the world. It's a phenomenon which has caused millions upon millions of people to lose their lives. However, I think that it's a mistake to equate black anti-Semitism with the anti-Semitism which exists in Germany, in Eastern Europe, and in the Middle East. If black people had the capability of organizing and carrying out a program against the Jews,

then there would be quite a bit of fear. Black people do not have that capability. Not only do blacks not have the capability, I doubt very seriously if blacks even have the desire.

Part of the personal controversy is coming about because no one has bothered to try and see that black anti-Semitism, if it can be called that, and I'm not sure it can, is a much different phenomenon. It is a different phenomenon because the power relationships which exist in this country are different. In Germany, the Jews are the minority surrounded by a majority which carried out against them rather heinous crimes. In America, it is we who are the Jews. It is we who are surrounded by a hostile majority. It is we who are constantly under attack. There is no need for black people to wear yellow Stars of David on their sleeves; that Star of David is all over us. In the city of New York a situation exists where black people, being powerless, are seeking to gain a degree of power over their lives and in the institutions which affect their lives. It so happens that in many of those institutions, the people who hold the power are Jews. Now in the attempt to gain power, if there is resistance by Jews to that, then of course blacks are going to respond. . . .

The Commission added:

Mr. Lester then made similar observations concerning the remarks by Tyrone Woods that Hitler should have made more Jews into lampshades, and stated that he feels "confident that those who have listened to this program more than once know that I have an intense reverence for life; and likewise, an intense love of people."

In another statement, the licensee invited the following organizations to engage in cooperative action over the station's facilities to combat "the dangers of bigotry, whether from blacks or whites": the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Congress, the Workmen's Circle, the Jewish Defense League, the New York Council of Rabbis, the National Jewish Committee on Law and Public Affairs, the United Federation of Teachers; the Afro-American Association, Black Student Unions, CORE, the Urban League, and the NAACP.

It also stated that it was resuming an earlier regular feature in WBAI's program schedule, the weekly commentary on Jewish affairs, a program in which spokesmen for all the Jewish organizations in the city are now being invited to participate.

Finally, WBAI's general manager stated that throughout the course of the teacher's strike, WBAI "respectfully invited the union to avail itself of our aim to respond to criticism and to publicize its position; that on some occasions, union spokesmen availed themselves of the offer, while at other times, they did not accept the offer. . . ."

## Everett Parker's broadcasting crusade

NORMAN M. LOBSENZ

Important precedents have been set, but the potential of citizen influence on regulatory agencies has only begun to be felt.

■ When attorneys for the Federal Communications Commission decided this September not to seek judicial review of a court decision revoking the license of WLBT-TV in Jackson, Miss., the antennae of the nation's 7,200 broadcasting stations quivered nervously. For the first time, a licensee had suffered the ultimate penalty for flouting the Federal Communications Act which requires a station to operate in the public interest. The action established—also for the first time—the right of any validly interested citizen to intervene in a license renewal hearing before the FCC. The sympathetic twinges in pocketbook nerves were instantaneous: many radio and TV stations promptly began giving more than lip service to the moral and legal obligations of fairness in programming practices.

The man primarily responsible for this milestone is the Rev. Everett C. Parker, director of the Office of Communication of the United

Church of Christ. The bald and plumpish fifty-six-year-old Parker for the past twenty years has worked quietly to convey through the mass media the mission of the Church in a changing world; and, conversely, to involve the Church in the search for social justice. (Ironically, before entering the ministry Parker was a newspaperman, radio program director, and an NBC public service executive.) Out of both his experience and his convictions, Parker became convinced not only that the right of access to communication channels is basic to democratic functioning, but also that the Church has a moral responsibility to fight for it—that the Judeo-Christian tradition is based on a seeking-after-truths, man's as well as God's.

"When there is injustice," Parker says, "people have to speak out, and the most effective place to be heard is in the marketplace of ideas, not the privacy of a closed room. If the marketplace is closed to certain people, this is the most unethical thing that can be done to them."

Yet under the process by which the FCC con-

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ducted hearings for renewal of broadcasting licenses, it was extraordinarily difficult even to question whether a station was doing what it could, or should, to provide this access: to reflect the concerns and to meet the needs of the community it served. Unless a potential rival filed a competing application—asking for the frequency to be denied to the incumbent and awarded to itself—the FCC routinely accepted statements in the renewal application and awarded another three-year license. Except for rival claimants, only representatives of the federal government, persons with an economic stake in the proceedings, or those claiming “electrical interference” were granted “standing” to intervene in the hearing.

For years Parker had sought a test case to challenge this system. “I talked to many communications lawyers. They said I couldn’t do it—the regulations wouldn’t let me in and the Commission would throw me out.” Finally, in 1964, Parker felt he had a valid issue. Two Jackson stations, WLBT and WJTV, were up for license renewal. Black citizens complained of unfair treatment. The charges were not unusual for the time and place: failure to offer adequate public affairs programming; discrimination against blacks in news selection and presentation; suppression of network shows, especially those covering controversial issues such as race relations; failure to use blacks on-camera in local programs, to cover black community affairs, or to use simple Mr.-Mrs.-Miss courtesy titles for blacks.

An informal program analysis supported the charges. And since black listeners comprised more than 40 per cent of the stations’ audience, Parker was convinced he could prove that the stations were violating the “public interest, convenience, and necessity” clause of the Federal Communications Act. As part of a church administration that believes strongly in acting on its ethical positions, Parker had the support of colleagues. They included, within the UCC hierarchy, the late Truman B. Douglass, Ben M. Herbster, C. Shelby Rooks, and Charles Cobb, and others such as Union Seminary professor Roger Shinn and public relations consultant Edward L. Grief. Attorneys Orrin Judd and Earle K. Moore agreed to file for a denial of license renewals.

Although the case itself became a legal classic—Moore calls it “perhaps the most important in communications law in decades”—during its five-year passage through FCC hearing rooms and appellate courts, much of the strategic byplay in it never has been reported. For instance, a station applying for renewal must fill out a log of a “composite week”—a sequence of days randomly chosen by the FCC. Unchallenged, this log may seem a paragon of broadcasting virtues. Challenged, it sometimes produces embarrassing surprises. “Public service” announcements, for example, may turn out to be, on closer inspection, plugs for programs, or for the station itself.

“We checked WLBT’s composite-week log,” explains Parker, “to find out what programs the network offered on those days and which of them the station carried or rejected.” Thus the United Church of Christ was able to show that the Jackson station cut out of the network when the *Today* program showed scenes of whites attacking black civil rights demonstrators. Similarly, a preview trailer for *Bonanza*, normally shown every week, was blacked out by the station only during the week that a black man was to be starred in the show. In addition, the United Church trained twenty-eight local residents to monitor one week of programs on both WLBT and WJTV. The audio signal was tape-recorded while monitors kept a written, minute-by-minute log of every program, commercial, and announcement. Each program sheet indicated whether blacks participated. If they did participate, or if there was any discussion of race relations, the monitor described how the person or the topic was treated.

This monitoring technique had been devised by Parker fifteen years ago when he and Dallas W. Smythe, a research economist and former chief economist for the FCC, directed a broadcast research project in New Haven, Conn., for the National Council of Churches and the Yale Divinity School. When the FCC was holding hearings on allocating educational television frequencies, the Parker-Smythe monitoring survey was offered in evidence—and was accepted by the Commission as a valid technique of sampling program content.

“When the FCC tried to downgrade and dis-

miss as 'amateur' our monitoring reports on the Jackson stations," says Parker, "we pointed out to the Commission that there was a precedent for them. They had already approved this technique. Faced with this, the Commission agreed to accept our logs as being equal, as a sampling technique, to its own 'composite-week' system."

Nevertheless—as expected—the FCC dismissed the petition to deny on the grounds that the United Church had no right to intervene in a license renewal proceeding. "In effect," Parker says, "the representatives of the public were being told they had nothing to say about the allocation of a national resource—a public communications channel—which was supposed to be used to serve the public." At the same time, however, the Commission took the unusual step of making the renewals contingent on terms which, in effect, gave credence to the United Church's charges; and it put into the record similar evidence from its own investigation. WJTV had to promise to continue programming reforms it had already begun. And WLBT received a one-year renewal only, pending proof that it, too, would mend its ways.

The Commission's majority, Parker has since decided, probably thought this compromise was terribly "cute." Says Parker: "They slapped the stations on the wrist, kissed us off on the standing issue, and figured they had given us 'do-gooders' our day in the sun by accepting our monitoring system."

More important was the sharp dissent filed by FCC Chairman E. William Henry and Commissioner Kenneth A. Cox. By defining important issues of law and fact overlooked or overridden by the majority, their opinion laid the basis for an appeal. The UCC, however, faced a dilemma. "Our aim," Parker emphasizes, "never was to get licenses revoked. We wanted to make broadcasters reform; we wanted them to realize they could not with impunity ignore their responsibility to serve *all* segments of the public. And even though WJTV immediately moved to correct its abuses, we felt that really significant progress would never come unless we could establish the right of "standing"—the right of a representative of the public interest to take part in renewal hearings. On the other hand, we

didn't want to upset the Commission's favorable ruling on our monitoring study. After all, that would be the core of the work we intended to do in the future."

The solution was to let the WJTV decision stand, but to appeal the WLBT verdict in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. To the amazement of almost everyone concerned with the case, the Court handed down a landmark decision in favor of the United Church of Christ. The WLBT license renewal was voided, the FCC was ordered to hold a public hearing on the issue and to grant the United Church standing at that hearing. Parker's primary aim—to set a precedent of the FCC's recognizing the right of a public representative to question a station's performance—was accomplished. More than that, the case seemed to "turn on" Circuit Judge Warren Burger, now Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. "After nearly five decades of operation," Burger wrote in his opinion, "the broadcast industry does not seem to have grasped the simple fact that a broadcast license is a public trust subject to termination for breach of duty."

What the owners of WLBT (the Lamar Life Insurance Company) did not grasp was that Everett Parker and the officials of the United Church were prepared to stay to the end. Even so, Parker and his attorneys met with station executives and offered to drop the case if the station would reform its racial practices.

The answer was no. Everett Parker believes now that WLBT's owners felt the United Church could not, or would not, sustain its effort for lack of money and manpower; and that thanks to subtle Congressional pressures the FCC hearing would be one-sided. "But when you are fighting this kind of a battle you don't give up," Parker said. "And there are all kinds of people who appear along the way to offer help."

Specialists in FCC legal procedures volunteered to prepare the hundreds of pages of documents required for the hearing. Law students from Yale and Columbia went South to gather affidavits. Money—always a problem—was eked out by a combination of grants from the Ford and the Field Foundations, funds from the United

Church's own Board for Homeland Ministries and Committee on Racial Justice, a few individual contributions, and billing of legal services at extremely nominal rates.

There were unpleasant personal moments. The man who had made his Jackson, Miss., house available as headquarters for the programming monitors was harassed for more than a year. Parker was not able to rent a copying machine in Jackson although he previously had made a deposit to reserve one. (But a friendly businessman quietly permitted Parker to use the machine in his own office.) Parker himself was victimized by a series of phony "investigators" who attempted to prowl through his personal life. In Mississippi

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*"The WLBT case is perhaps the most important in communications law in decades."*

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to help obtain affidavits, Parker and his wife, Geneva, were photographed by police and were ominously tailed by men in unmarked cars.

The FCC hearing was held in Jackson in May of 1967. Against express orders of the Circuit Court, the examiner placed the burden of proof on the petitioners, refused to give credence to the statements of the United Church's witnesses, denied on occasion the right to cross-examine, and generally ruled against it on every key point. Evidence was blithely disregarded or overruled: When attorney Earle Moore raised the point that WLBT consistently substituted network programs for locally-originated shows that would have been of more interest and concern to blacks, the examiner said incredulously: "You mean Negroes don't like *Bonanza*?"

In the end, the hearing examiner recommended that WLBT's license be renewed for the normal three-year period. An FCC majority approved the decision, and again a dissent by Commissioners Cox and Nicholas Johnson set the tone for appeal to the Circuit Court, which had retained jurisdiction over the case. Last June, in one of Justice Burger's final acts before

moving to the Supreme Court, he reversed the FCC, expressing "profound concern" over its handling of the case. As a result WLBT's license was vacated and the FCC ordered to consider new applicants. The only one so far is a bi-racial group headed by Charles Evers, Hodding Carter III, and Aaron Henry, a black civil rights leader active in the original petition against WLBT.

For broadcasters, the implications of the final action on the WLBT matter were far-reaching. Southern stations voluntarily began to upgrade their programming for blacks and to consult with leaders of the black community. Much of this, however, remains within the traditional Southern parameters—concentration on such relatively "safe" contacts as ministers and teachers, and on programs which have the least likelihood of verging on "controversial" issues.

Along the legal grapevine, word spread that many communications law firms had prepared memos for their clients urging them to institute fairer local programming lest they risk being challenged at renewal time. By the same token, such challenges promised both to be more numerous and effective. Obviously, the FCC itself must now deal more seriously with complaints from public groups. Petitions which might formerly have been summarily dismissed may now receive a hearing. Hearings produce publicity. Publicity can stimulate more petitions for hearings. Convinced that they now have a fighting chance, many local committees are organizing to monitor the output of broadcasters serving their areas and, if advisable, to challenge license renewal applications.

But as Everett Parker points out, the main thrust of any such efforts must be moral rather than legal, and aimed at compromise rather than showdowns. Few volunteer groups, unless unusually dedicated, can mount a sustained action which may involve them in hearings and court appeals for months or even years. The enthusiasm of volunteers tends to decline; someone gets sick; someone else moves away; someone else gets a vacation at a critical time. And sometimes, because of political or economic pressure—or personal ambition—there are defectors. In one Idaho community, Parker reports, one of the women

who had been on the monitoring plans committee from the start of the project took all its files to the station under investigation. "She got the job she wanted with the station," Parker said.

Nor are such campaigns inexpensive. The Ford Foundation's current \$160,000 grant to the United Church was estimated to cover costs of monitoring, program analysis, travel, Office of Communication staff expenses, and minimum legal fees for twelve community studies. A monitoring study itself, in which up to a dozen men and women may be hired and trained to observe a station's program content, can cost as much as \$5,000 just to obtain the raw data—before the material is put into the computers. Fortunately, the moral thrust (backed, of course, by the implicit threat of eventual license action) is proving effective.

One of Parker's most satisfying experiences occurred in connection with a community move against station KTAL, in Texarkana, Tex. (and Ark.). As often happens, the Office of Communication was brought into the project through a local United Church minister, the Rev. David Stephens (whose Presbyterian church is part of an ecumenical movement in Texarkana, where more than 150 churches serve 100,000 people). Stephens, who considers himself a "social change agent," was part of a biracial group which set out to test public opinion about the station. In addition to the usual complaints of noncoverage by the black community, however, the whites were upset. KTAL's studio had been moved to the larger market of Shreveport, La. Although KTAL is licensed to Texarkana and is the only TV outlet serving it, the station tended to shortchange that city in programming and coverage. Even the Texarkana Junior Chamber of Commerce was upset enough to complain to the FCC.

"At first," Stephens told me, "we didn't know we had any rights vis-à-vis the operation of the station at all. We didn't realize that the television frequency was a public trust; that it was, in effect, ours. But with the help of Parker's staff, we filed a petition to deny.

"The station immediately got in touch with everyone who had signed the petition to find out exactly what the community's complaints were,

and how programming could be improved. Eventually, KTAL asked a mediator to meet with Parker and Moore. Meetings were set between citizen groups—black and white—on the one hand, and station officials on the other, including KTAL owner Walter Hussman. An agreement satisfactory to both sides was worked out in three days—faster than any of us believed possible."

The ripple-in-the-pond effect of Parker's technique has been noteworthy in the Texarkana instance. Two Shreveport stations—obliged to serve Texarkana as well since that city lies within their main signal area—were monitored with United Church help with an eye to a KTAL-type agreement. The Texarkana group involved Shreveport citizens in the project, and the Louisiana group is now planning to observe the public-service record of other stations in their area. Meanwhile, the group in Texarkana—buttressed and solidified by its original success—has been able to take steps in other areas of community action. A biracial Texas Ecumenical Action Ministry (TEAM), involving whites who never before had made common cause with black, is only one example.

Parker's assistance has also been instrumental in helping to combat flagrant violations of the FCC's Fairness Doctrine as it relates to personal attacks. In many communities, "open mike" talk shows—which invite telephoned comments from listeners (often unidentified)—are frequently monopolized by right-wing extremist elements. The doctrine requires broadcasters to air all sides of controversial issues, and to grant free reply time to any individual whose character or integrity is maligned.

"The 'call-in' programs—where a studio announcer chats with members of the audience—are particularly vulnerable to being dominated by callers who express extremist views," Parker reported to the Seventh General Synod of his church this year, "usually with the approval and cooperation of the station's 'host.' In Boise, a Methodist district superintendent was repeatedly attacked and charged with Communism for supporting UNICEF. In Concord, Calif., a United Church of Christ minister was accused over the air of being a Communist. In neither case was

the person attacked given an opportunity to reply. In other towns, call-in programs were used by station managers or owners to make political or personal attacks with no effort to make time for reply available."

Aided by Parker's staff, citizen groups in these communities made vigorous protests to the stations, coupled with plans to file protests with the

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***"People must speak out,  
and the most effective forum  
is in the marketplace..."***

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FCC. In almost all cases the objectionable attacks stopped at once, and the call-in shows' formats were revised to keep falsehoods and innuendo off the air. In at least two cases, station executives were fired.

Such mutually-agreed-upon settlements are far more pleasing to Everett Parker than any compulsory legalistic triumphs. "We are not out to 'get' anybody's license," he says. "We don't think monitoring a station's programming should become a national parlor game for dilettantes. Broadcasters have a financial investment. They want to make the largest amount of money they can make. And average profit in the industry is 62 per cent a year on depreciated investment. But broadcasters also would, I think, rather serve the community than not serve it. Leaving out network people, local station owners and operators have a stake in the community. They live there and are going to stay there. At the very least they are not going to turn the community against them if they can help it. So our object is not only to avoid litigation, but to avoid a showdown confrontation between community and station. Our objective is always to have the station do the best it can to serve the needs of its audience, once those needs are made clear."

A third area which concerns Parker today involves fair employment in broadcasting. In April, 1967, the UCC—backed by two dozen national organizations—petitioned the FCC to make fair employment practice a condition of getting or

renewing a broadcast license. (This was another precedent: the first time the FCC ever had accepted a petition from a public group on its rule-making procedures.) "And a year later the Commission announced that it would, indeed, adopt such a rule as we had requested," Parker explains. "The only catch was, the FCC did not plan to require stations to show any *proof* of their compliance with the rule—obviously making it virtually unenforceable." Once again Parker applied moral pressure to the FCC. Congressmen, the Justice Department, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, and thirty-six national organizations joined the United Church in protest. Networks, stations, and the National Association of Broadcasters opposed requiring of proof as an "unduly burdensome" chore.

Parker won. But winning in this arena frequently signals more the beginning of a new effort than a celebration of the old one. At this writing, attorney Moore is filing statements with the FCC on how the employment-report forms should be styled. The broadcasting industry would prefer to report mere number-total statistics. The United Church claims that what is needed is a form especially tailored for the industry, separating on-camera from off-camera personnel, editorial people from technicians. "That way," Moore explained, "it is far easier to find out if blacks and other minority groups—who may indeed be employed—are employed where it counts: handling the news and being visible on the home screen."

Parker's long campaign to mobilize and make effective citizen involvement in broadcasting practices has, surprisingly, not been wholly satisfying to him. He has won precedent-setting legal victories. He has successfully attacked the involved FCC rules and practices. On November 11, he received the first Alfred I. du Pont-Columbia University Award in Broadcast Journalism, and the American Jewish Committee has given him and the Office of Communication its Mass Media Award for "courageous leadership in vindicating the people's interest in a broadcaster's performance of its public trust." On the other hand, the National Association of Broadcasters has

indirectly accused Parker of wanting to set himself up as a "super-censor . . . a super program director." He is saddened to admit that his work has lost him "a lot of friends in the broadcast industry."

Parker's confreres on the Broadcasting and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches not only failed to give him positive support early in his campaign, but in many ways operated against his goals and methods. In the WLBT case, for example, the Commission took refuge in technicalities to refuse to file an *amicus curiae* brief backing Parker's appeal. But success breeds success, and Parker recently was unanimously elected to a three-year term as Commission chairman.

Such additional demands on his time and energies are nothing new to Parker, nor to his long-suffering family. As one of the top officers of the United Church, Parker is involved in virtually all matters of church policy and programs. Administratively, he is responsible for an Office of Communication which turns out everything from routine press releases to documentary films and radio programs. About half his time is spent away from his desk—anywhere from a meeting in Chicago to lecturing in Tokyo to running a film crew in the African bush. Intense as any executive, Parker can be as demanding of others as of himself. His mild-mannered appearance belies the quality of drive that led him into church public relations and administration rather than taking a pulpit (although he does some supply preaching during the summer and is available to conduct weddings for friends). Of the world as well as in it, Parker enjoys creature comforts, fine wines, his wife's gourmet cooking, and almost any good argument. Home—when he can be there—is a rambling colonial house in White Plains, N.Y., filled largely with sculpture and paintings brought back from his travels. He has two married daughters, one college-student son, and two grandchildren.

But despite the lure of home and family, Parker is far from ready to rest on any laurels. Every letter asking for advice or assistance in assessing a station's performance gets an answer. So far, more than 300 community groups have written

the United Church. Under the UCC's Ford Foundation grant, the campaign continues to discourage racial discrimination in broadcasting. Because TV is a prime reflector and conditioner of racial attitudes, there is a "leverage" effect here—where a relatively small amount of grant money is able to accomplish much.

New obstacles arise. Changed FCC rules regarding the timing of renewal applications and petitions to deny them are placing a serious burden on groups who want to raise such a challenge. "The rules make it virtually impossible," says Parker, "to get the information necessary to file a petition to deny because there are only about ten days in which to do it." At the same time a bill offered by Senator John Pastore would prevent anyone from filing an application for an occupied frequency unless the FCC first declared the incumbent licensee unfit. "This combination—making it harder to file a petition to deny renewal, and impossible to file a competing application—would leave a current license-holder with a virtual lock on his monopoly," says Parker. "Instead of doing this, the FCC should welcome, should be advertising for people to come in and show whether they could do a better job."

In Parker's view, the public's right of access to broadcasting facilities is a key element of free speech, and First Amendment guarantees take precedence over private interests of broadcast franchise holders. Indeed, this was affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court last June when it unanimously upheld the Fairness Doctrine, on grounds that, in the words of Justice Byron White, "[the rules] enhance rather than abridge the freedom of speech and press. . . . It is the right of the viewers, not the right of broadcasters, which is paramount."

"Unless the broadcasting industry comes to accept that view," says Parker, "it will close itself off from the American people. When a frequency is licensed to you, you are a trustee, a fiduciary as Justice Burger put it. . . . You are acting in my interest, and therefore you must serve the changing needs of my community. Any institution which does not respond with new understanding to the crunch of this change is going to be done for."

## The Chronicle: schizophrenia by the Bay

DAVID M. RUBIN  
and  
WILLIAM L. RIVERS

Youth and early adulthood behind it, San Francisco's Great Lady now controls the morning newsstands, but to what end?

■ To those who know the San Francisco *Chronicle* only casually through visits and hearsay, the paper is synonymous with Herb Caen. This is understandable. As the cleverest local-tidbits columnist in the three-dot school of journalism, Caen is to the *Chronicle* what Gideon is to Bibles. But to those who know well the long battle with Hearst and Scripps-Howard for dominance in San Francisco, the synonym for the *Chronicle* is executive editor Scott Newhall.

Since his appointment in 1952, Newhall has been leader of a quintet of executives who have pushed the paper from third in San Francisco (with 154,608 circulation) to first in 1969 (circulation 480,233). Newhall and associates—president and editor Charles de Young Thieriot, news editor Bill Garman, managing editor Gordon

Pates, and city editor Abe Mellinkoff—contrived a splashy paper which buried Scripps-Howard in San Francisco and wounded Hearst. The executives fashioned a joint operating agreement with Hearst which has given the *Chronicle* undisputed control of the lucrative morning market. Newhall's *Chronicle* is now by far the largest and most influential newspaper in the San Francisco Bay Area, a nine-county region of nearly 5 million residents encompassing San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, and dozens of smaller cities.

With thick shoulders, short, muscular arms, and knotty hands, Newhall is not the picture of the genteel newspaper editor. A wooden leg (the result of an infection contracted in 1936 in Acapulco) interrupts but does not slow his gait. His face, especially with a 5 o'clock shadow, is ruggedly sinister. He looks vaguely like a man who might be featured in a *Look* exposé of the Mafia. His phrases are sometimes similarly tough. In an interview with the famous *Berkeley Barb*, Newhall was forthright about the quality of the daily press and the aims of the Establishment, of

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William L. Rivers, who wrote *The Opinionmakers* and is co-author of *Responsibility in Mass Communication* (revised edition), is professor of communication at Stanford. David M. Rubin is an advanced Ph.D. candidate there. This article is adapted from their forthcoming book, *The San Francisco Bay Area Press* (Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California at Berkeley).

which Newhall's boss, Charles Theriot, is a charter Bay Area member:

We have to play it cooler than you underground papers. We have to keep the Establishment anesthetized so they don't feel the pain as we stick the needle into their archaic veins and give them a transfusion....

The press is in danger; not the kind of Hollywood danger, but the danger of dissolving into a gray mass of non-ideas. The underground press will replenish the straight press and keep it alive.

But it was a Newhall editorial of February 27, 1969, that made him the talk of San Francisco and gave readers an unforgettable glimpse of the strong personality that has distinctively stamped the *Chronicle*. The editorial was a reaction to a public Board of Education meeting on the volatile issue of busing-integration. A number of citizens and a *Chronicle* photographer at the meeting were beaten by small groups of thugs opposed to the busing plan. The attackers escaped unidentified. Newhall's editorial called the men "self-appointed heirs of Hitler's brownshirts," "professional thugs," and "intellectually underprivileged . . . overnourished apes." He closed the editorial with a challenge (which, at this writing, has not been answered):

The members of this band of social neanderthals are obviously too insecure and too frightened to come forward and identify themselves. But, if they should miraculously care to do so, they can either call GA 1-1111, extension 463, or come to this writer's office, which is Room 332 on the third floor.

On the other hand, if this phantom squad of bullies cares to take umbrage at these remarks and wishes to continue its typical cowardly and disgraceful activities, it can catch the executive editor of this paper almost any week night on the darkened Fifth Street sidewalk at the side entrance to the *Chronicle*. He leaves the building at approximately 8 p.m. each evening on his way home.

Or, if they prefer, they can catch him quite alone in his San Francisco residence. The address is 1050 Northpoint Street. Simply ask the doorman for Apartment 708 and you will be escorted to the elevator.

Although the *Chronicle* is not really the crusading muckraker this sketch of Newhall might

indicate, it is certainly a maverick among metropolitan dailies. One editor, with some justification, has called it "the only above-ground underground paper in the United States." Once a country-club haven for talented reporters, the *Chronicle* now has a staff as hip as the city. One young reporter said with pride, "If there was a wholesale pot bust in San Francisco tomorrow, 80 per cent of the city-side reporters and copydesk would be in jail."

How the *Chronicle* became what one of its columnists calls "a daily satire on American journalism" is instructive. Beginning in 1935, when Paul Smith, twenty-six years old, took over as executive editor (Newhall joined the paper as a photographer that same year), the *Chronicle* tried to become either the "New York Times of the West" or the "Western New York Herald Tribune." Most observers of the period remember the *Chronicle* under Smith as *Times*-like, with an emphasis on national and international reporting, sometimes quite heavy. But there was also a strong emphasis on flavorful writing of the sort usually associated with the late *Herald Tribune*. Smith went on recruiting forays to the East—and indeed, everywhere—and lured bright young reporters and editors with promises of "a machine gun in every typewriter." This was a heady period.

Since its founding, the *Chronicle* has been operated by members of the de Young family and their relatives. The "de Young" of that time was George Cameron, father-in-law of current *Chronicle* publisher Charles de Young Thieriot. Smith enjoyed Cameron's confidence and was so influential in Republican politics that he accompanied former President Hoover, who was still the grand pooh-bah of the GOP during the 1930s, on a trip to Europe. Smith was asked by reform-minded Republicans in 1939 to run for mayor of San Francisco. Leaders brought him a stack of petitions carrying 47,000 signatures of San Franciscans who would back him. Smith turned them down, saying that he wanted to continue to direct the *Chronicle*.

How he achieved this status can be stated simply: Smith produced a sturdy, informative, interesting failure. He offered urbane, cosmopolitan

San Franciscans a chance to support a quality newspaper, but most of them declined. By commercial standards, so did the *Chronicle*. A sick circulation list and lean advertising revenues combined with the impending retirement of Cameron and the accession of Charles Thieriot to suggest to Smith that his power would be reduced. So in 1952, he moved on to Crowell-Collier, taking *Chronicle* reporter Pierre Salinger with him. (While Salinger was working for *Collier's* magazine, which died before he could write much for it, he met the Kennedys.)

Newhall, who under Smith had become editor of the *Chronicle's* Sunday magazine *This World*, then became executive editor with the mission of overtaking Hearst's *Examiner*. News editor German, who, with columnist Art Hoppe, is known as a leader of the *Chronicle's* intellectual underground, has written deftly of the paper's strategy in a widely circulated memo:

What strength there was in the old *Chronicle* had always been with the upper level of the population, the upper level economically and intellectually. Home-delivered circulation was proportionately high. Street sales were low. Strategy and tactics called for attracting many non-readers of our eggheadish newspaper into our tent, and, once there, keeping them from drifting out again. It was also essential that our core of serious readers not be so disaffected by the raucousness of our new spiel that they pack up and go elsewhere.

The concern for serious readers was sometimes hidden as the *Chronicle* plunged rapaciously after circulation. A daily banner was added to the street edition, which was "no longer reserved for the most consequential news of the day," German continues. "The banner under its new concept was to be a piece of promotional advertising for the sale of that day's edition, much in the manner of a headline on the cover of a slick magazine." Leads were set in larger type, and white space was splashed around heads and pictures. Reporters were encouraged to reflect their own reactions to events—which German has called the *Chronicle* "cult of personality."

Newhall recognized the value of a daily surprise, and the most successful circulation-builders were a scattershot collection of wild pseudo-



The *Chronicle* at birth (1865), in adolescence (1936), and in frivolous middle age (1969).

stories, some of them running for weeks, which provided a sharp contrast to the straight journalism of other Bay Area dailies. Jonathan Root waged a campaign against poor coffee in San Francisco restaurants under such front-page banners as A GREAT CITY IS FORCED TO DRINK SWILL.

Reporter George Draper played up a press agent's campaign to clothe naked animals, which led to the founding of chapters of SINA (Society for Indecency to Naked Animals). This received national attention when Draper tried to start a chapter in the U.S.S.R. And in 1960, outdoors editor Bud Boyd was sent into the wilderness of the High Sierras to act as "The Last Man on Earth."

Boyd, his wife, and their three children were to portray the sole survivors of an H-Bomb at-

tack and test man's ability to survive. The *Chronicle* asked in a front-page note: "Could an average city-dweller exist in the wilderness tomorrow with little more than his bare hands?" Daily dispatches tried to answer that question. One reported a "night of terror" during which the Boyds fought for "survival against cold and exhaustion." At the height of considerable interest in the series, the rival morning paper, Hearst's *Examiner*, sent a reporter to the Sierras. His first dispatch carried reports from "unassailable sources" that the Boyds had left their camp. At the campsite, the *Examiner* reporter found (and documented with pictures) fresh eggs, empty spaghetti cans, chipped-beef containers, kitchen matches, Coke bottles, enough toilet paper to start a fire, and other amenities suggesting that the Boyds had not been exactly deprived during their wilderness sojourn. *Chronicle* and *Examiner* executives waged an editorial battle over the series, with Boyd and Newhall even appearing on the *Chronicle's* television station, KRON-TV, to present a "report to the people."

It was left to the afternoon *News-Call-Bulletin*, then so near its end that it was barely involved in the competitive struggle, to provide a masterful closing touch. City editor Harry Press assigned one of his reporters to test man's ability to survive in lush Golden Gate Park. The reporter wrote touchingly of his ordeal and was pictured surrounded by caviar, champagne, and voluptuous blondes.

The *Chronicle* had other weapons, notably a string of highly literate columnists. Some had started with the paper before the Newhall regime. Others were taken on by Newhall; some of these were reporters whose distinctive styles had caught Newhall's eye. Before Newhall was through, he was publishing so many local columns that his *Chronicle* sometimes seemed to be a "viewspaper." And although the *Chronicle's* huge package often seemed to add up to little more than a ton of feathers, it offered the most provocative writers in the Bay Area, with Herb Caen and political satirist Art Hoppe the acknowledged stars.

Some of Newhall's ideas for columns were highly effective and original. The lead column

in the sports section was given to Charles McCabe, an elegant stylist from the city side who had offered no evidence that he knew the difference between a touchdown and the left-field foul line. From the first, McCabe operated outside the routine of the sportswriter, and he seemed never to develop the rapport with athletes, coaches, general managers, and owners that subtly ties the hands of so many who write about sports. The result was a column, aptly titled "The Fearless Spectator," that was the most refreshing in the world of athletics.

Nearly all the views the *Chronicle* offered were liberal. After the death of Lucius Beebe, whose Sunday column carried some of the most outrageously reactionary judgments in the most delightful phrases, not a conservative voice could be heard. The only editorial balance came at election time in the unsigned editorials. Although the editorials often sounded the same liberal themes voiced by the columnists, the *Chronicle* endorsed many conservatives (including George Murphy in his 1964 Senate race against Pierre Salinger). In effect, the paper talked Democratic and voted Republican.

This was the scattershot lineup Scott Newhall threw into the battle for dominance in San Francisco. It worked. The pattern of merger which would reduce San Francisco from four independent dailies to two with a Siamese-twin relationship began to take shape. First the afternoon Scripps-Howard *News* and the Hearst *Call-Bulletin* combined, with Scripps-Howard taking editorial control and Hearst running business, advertising, production, and distribution. Then in 1962, Scripps-Howard sold its 50 per cent interest to Hearst, which gave Hearst the afternoon *News-Call-Bulletin* as well as the morning *Examiner*.

Then the *New York Times* introduced its heralded Western edition. A *Times* executive later admitted that the *Los Angeles Times*, on its way to becoming a great paper under Otis Chandler, was thought to be too strong to allow the New Yorkers really to succeed in Southern California, but that they did expect to do well in the North. They were mistaken. A poor record in the first year and strike troubles at home soon caused the Western edition's demise.

The *Chronicle* and the *Examiner* continued to battle for morning superiority, with the *Chronicle* ahead 351,489 to 301,356 by 1964. The Chronicle Publishing Company was in excellent financial health because of profits from KRON-TV—a situation which, ironically, soon was to cause publisher Charles Thieriot considerable difficulty. In a Senate hearing on the "Newspaper Preservation Act" (then known as the "Failing Newspaper Act") in July, 1967, he first said that with the exception of 1956 the *Chronicle* had lost money "in modest proportions" through 1964. Only then he testified, did the *Chronicle* "break even." The circulation war with the *Examiner*, he explained, was fought with KRON-TV profits. But in December of 1967, in a letter to Michigan Senator Philip Hart, Thieriot reversed his position, perhaps because he realized that using TV profits to drive a competitive newspaper to the wall might be damaging at license renewal time

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## *"How did the Chronicle become... a daily satire on American journalism?"*

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for KRON-TV (which has proved to be the case). Thieriot wrote: "Before depreciation, newspaper operations showed a small and manageable loss in 1955, a profit in 1956, somewhat larger but manageable losses in 1957 and 1958, and, as indicated above, a profit for each year commencing with 1959 through September, 1965, with the single exception of 1962."

Despite the contradiction, it is clear that the *Chronicle* was not a failing newspaper. Indeed, of the three San Francisco newspapers published in 1964, it may be that only Hearst's afternoon *News-Call-Bulletin* was failing; its circulation was down to 183,176. Hearst sued for peace with a scheme that would kill the *News-Call-Bulletin*, move the *Examiner* to the afternoon, give the *Chronicle* the morning market, and insure sol-

vency for both the *Examiner* and the *Chronicle* through profit-splitting. Why did not Hearst simply kill the *News-Call-Bulletin* and move the *Examiner* to the afternoon without making a deal with the *Chronicle*? The only answer seems to be the lure of a guaranteed profit. Bruce Burgmann, who has been battling what he calls "Superchron" ever since the agreement, has charged as much in his monthly *San Francisco Bay Guardian*. *Chronicle* executives do not offer a better explanation.

On October 23, 1964, the two companies agreed to form the San Francisco Newspaper Printing Company, with stock to be owned equally by the Chronicle Publishing Company and Hearst. The new corporation would perform the mechanical, circulation, advertising, accounting, credit, and collection functions for both papers. When the agreement was submitted to the Department of Justice August 30, 1965, the Attorney General replied that he did not for the present plan to institute antitrust action. On September 1, incorporation papers were filed in Carson City, Nev., and on September 12 the merger went into effect. Neither paper has ever given its readers a full account of these actions.

Yet even with the secure place thus won as the Bay Area's largest and most influential newspaper, the *Chronicle* has not abandoned the editorial strategy that the executives thought necessary to gain dominance. Indeed, the strategy has become a full-blown philosophy. As German has written: "The formula at the *Chronicle* calls for a combination of fact, truth, and fun. Each edition each day should approach the goal of informing and entertaining most of the people most of the time." Newhall expresses the same thoughts more colorfully, likening the front page to a circus barker saying, "Hurry, hurry, hurry, the girls are just about to take off their clothes." Once inside, the reader finds a story about Vietnam—or so the theory runs.

The theory, however, undergoes considerable strain. The *Chronicle* is edited to be read so quickly that the reader who cares about social and political affairs is likely to finish the edition with the guilty feeling that he has been having more fun than reading a newspaper should give him. A fast reader can go through most *Chron-*

icle stories in a minute or two. The news ethic, as city editor Mellinkoff sees it, is, "Will someone read the story? If the story is not read, it's not news." German believes that a good test of a story's value is whether people will talk about it. This has led to permissive editing that shocks many San Franciscans. "We decided," German says, "not to be any more bluenosed than the society in which we lived. When a topless bathing suit was first designed and debated, we fitted out a model in the first such suit and published her picture in a prominent position in the paper."

The emphasis on snappy, readable stories is so antithetic to long-running series that the *Chronicle* publishes fewer than does any other metropolitan paper in the Bay Area. Those it does run are usually memorable, either because a reporter is deeply interested in the subject, as Bill Moore was in exposing the unhappy conditions in Chinatown, or because the reporter hit on a subject that titillates, as when a long series reported on the short movies in which women "act" as undraped love objects—movies known to San Franciscans as "beavers." These series are exceptional because, as Mellinkoff says, "a paper should be complete in itself." A *Chronicle* reporter adds that it is almost "unheard of" for a reporter to be sprung loose from his daily assignments to write a deep story. This is somewhat paradoxical, for Newhall holds and the paper has argued editorially that radio and TV have taken over the spot-news world, and it is now the task of the newspaper to explain, interpret, and clarify. Newhall complains that some of his deskmen are so old-fashioned that they do not understand interpretation.

Where Newhall has succeeded in making his influence felt is in promoting personal journalism on the part of reporters. The *Chronicle's* coverage in May, 1969, of the "People's Park" controversy in Berkeley was notable for reporter-involvement with police and demonstrators. Informative and readable stories also sprang from the arrest and incarceration of reporter Tom Findley at the Santa Rita Prison Farm after a mass bust and from the attendance of other *Chronicle* writers at "People's Party" meetings. One *Chronicle* editor holds up as models Norman Mailer's story

of the march on the Pentagon and his account of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, explaining: "We're feeling our way toward a new method of communication in print without the stereotypes of what a paper is supposed to look like."

The *Chronicle* has also been feeling its way toward a new kind of international reporting—with wildly mixed results. Although the paper has no bureaus abroad (and none in Washington), it buys stories from stringers in foreign countries. (The costs of this operation may be gauged from a letter, which fell into the hands of a rival paper, inquiring when the letter-writer would receive a \$12 check for his dispatch from India.) There is little danger that these stringers will duplicate the work of the many foreign reporters for wire services and other newspapers. As one *Chronicle* editor said: "We have a general disinterest in detailed coverage of foreign economics and politics. We think our readers are more concerned with whether or not they use Saran Wrap in Kuala Lumpur than with New York *Times*-type foreign coverage."

*Chronicle* editors instruct their stringers to try to determine what people are talking about over lunch in cities around the world. In theory this is an exciting idea and one not very far afield from the relatively recent desire among other foreign editors to have their operatives report on the fabric of life around the world. But judging from what appears in the *Chronicle*, the stringers eavesdrop on peculiar lunchtime conversations: They find that Parisians never talk about Pompidou, de Gaulle, the Common Market, French glory, or French philosophy; the English never talk about the Government's austerity program, the rise of the red-brick universities, taxes, or the problems of the pound. In fact, lunch-table conversations over the world are startlingly alike: Everyone everywhere is apparently talking about sex, voodoo, witchcraft, drinking (in India, Trivandrum is talking about "Toddy Tapping"), or some form of eccentric behavior.

This may be oversimplifying, but not much. When a young *Chronicle* reporter heard our judgment of his paper's international coverage and urged us to look again because a new, more

serious line was beginning, we checked the next two issues. One reported that Tokyo was talking about "Coffee Shop Classes," and the next that Colombo, Ceylon, was talking about "Human Smuggling."

It is all fun, and it may be the only kind of foreign news most subscribers will read. But one shudders to think of the masses of copy the editors junk every night, some of it penetrating reportage. For the *Chronicle* not only receives such conventional services as AP and UPI; Newhall also has the special news services provided by the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times-Washington Post*, the North American Newspaper Alliance, the *Chicago Daily News*, the *London Times*, and the *Guardian*. Not only does the *Chronicle* scrap an overwhelming percentage of

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*"The people are in the tent. Will they be offered escapism, or more?"*

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all this; its territorial arrangements keep these special services out of nearly all the other Bay Area newspapers. Nor can the rival papers publish *Chronicle* columnists—and this may be the chief reason the *Chronicle's* circulation is more than twice that of any other Bay Area paper. Newhall prefers home-grown columns. His eye for a distinctive style is so sharp that no rival paper comes close to providing as much cleverness and titillation.

This leadership begins with Herb Caen and Art Hoppe. It is no more rewarding to try to define Caen's qualities than it is to try to dissect a joke, but certain values are clear. Unlike many of his colleagues, Caen works. His column is usually packed with pointed information and anecdotes. He sometimes fills it with one of those "essays" so dear to the columnist who is straining for something to say, but ordinarily his prose poems to San Francisco and environs appear

only on Sundays (he writes the Sunday column the preceding Tuesday) or when he is trying to catch his breath after a vacation. Most of his writing is lean; he has an unusually sensitive ear for the quip or anecdote only marginally worth printing, and he apologizes for printing it with a deprecating phrase as effective as Johnny Carson's rueful and engaging recovery line: "That was a little bit of humor there."

Caen is much more than a gossip columnist, if only because the spread and intensity of his readership give him unusual influence. He may ride a political horse for only a sentence or two, but then a few days later another sentence appears on the same or a similar theme, and a week later, an anecdote—and suddenly Herb Caen's political leanings are quite clear. They are distinctly liberal leanings.

Hoppe, who is less widely known than Art Buchwald and Russell Baker, may nonetheless be the nation's best political satirist. Although Buchwald has greater celebrity—he is a genuinely funny man whose column misses as often as it hits—he often seems a bit bland compared to Hoppe. Russell Baker is probably the most gifted writer of the three, but has trouble finding the themes that will carry his richly wry commentary. Hoppe has more ideas, and better ideas, than either of his rivals. It is easy to suspect, too, that Hoppe is much more the political animal than is either Buchwald or Baker. There is an acid quality in much of his whimsy. He observes the foibles of humans (especially those in government), focuses on one of their more dubious enterprises, then imagines in print that it has been carried to an absurd conclusion. It is political commentary of a very high order.

For all their great value, Caen and Hoppe are much more writers, in effect, than they are reporters. But some of the specialty columnists do report and are fairly substantive. Ralph Gleason on pop culture, William Hogan on books, Terrence O'Flaherty on television, and Art Rosenbaum on sports—these are often meaty offerings. But Adeline Daley, Merla Zellerbach, Stanton Delaplane, Ron Fimrite, and Charles McCabe (who now has a general column) most often write cleverly about very little. Count Marco

writes offensively about women, and manages to offend man as well as women. Some issues of the *Chronicle* suggest that not a columnist left the building the day before; everything was spun off the top of somebody's head, and the reader seems to be mushing over a mountain of whipped cream.

The *Chronicle's* approach to society and women's page news is so frivolous that one young reporter terms it "a clarion call to revolution." Although Thieriot rarely interferes with the work of the news department, his hand is heavy on the society pages, where his country club friends appear regularly. The space given to the debutante cotillion set is so far out of balance that some of the society writers are "frankly upset." They want more articles on black women and on the sexual and social problems of modern women.

Thieriot's concern with society even extends to sports, where sports editor Art Rosenbaum has been pushed into covering society golf tournaments. The sports department is not given the money to cover the U.S. Open or the PGA. And the *Chronicle* was the only major paper in the Bay Area which did not staff the "basketball game of the century" in Los Angeles: the Lew Alcindor-Elvin Hayes rematch in 1968, which would have cost a \$30 plane ticket. Sportswriter Dave Bush "covered" it by TV in a *Chronicle* conference room.

*Chronicle* staff members complain about such matters, but the general morale is quite high. They are almost unanimously in love with the ratty-appearing city room, and they sneer at the "straight" papers which surround them. There is pride in a staff which boasts science writer David Perlman, labor writer Dick Meister, and reporters Keith Power, Michael Grieg, Jerry Carroll, and Bill Moore, among others. If *Chronicle* staff members have a major concern, it is probably over who will succeed Newhall. His health is poor, and it has not been improved during the long months the *Chronicle* has been arguing with federal officials over its joint operating agreement and the future of KRON-TV. The company is on shaky ground in both cases. The Tucson decision makes it likely that agreements of the sort that married the *Chronicle* to the *Examiner* are illegal unless Congress legalizes them.

KRON-TV presents even worse problems. Its license renewal was delayed in part because of complaints by a KRON cameraman, Al Kihn, that his station distorted the news to the benefit of the larger company. When General Motors set private detectives on the trail of Ralph Nader, the *Chronicle* editorialized against snooping. But company officials sent detectives after Kihn. Until Brugmann's *Bay Guardian* revealed this snooping and the FCC forced the company to admit that it had occurred, neither the *Chronicle* nor KRON-TV reported it. FCC eyebrows have been raised high over the whole affair.

Whatever the outcome of these cases, Newhall's retirement is not far away. The young *Chronicle* men, who seem to like both news editor German and city editor Mellinkoff, are betting that one of them will become the new executive editor. Managing editor Pates is also a possibility. The basic question is whether Newhall's successor will continue the *Chronicle* philosophy of fact, truth, and fun—with emphasis on fun. The potential successors have given no sign that they are displeased with the paper's design and purposes; that they have aspirations to national influence comparable to that of, say, the *Los Angeles Times*. And yet, since the merger, there have been no more of the wild pseudo-stories. Moreover, during recent months, while Newhall has been jousting with federal officials and has given less attention to the paper, new strains of seriousness have been threaded through the *Chronicle*. The "talking about" series continues, but there are other international reports, and several of the stringers abroad have been giving as much attention to information as to titillation.

It is still a *Chronicle* cursed by parents who would prefer that their sons be left ignorant of the female form, still a *Chronicle* which seems to smile on fads and foibles no matter how bizarre. But if there is not enough world news to please a professor of international relations, there is at least enough for a high school student to clip for his report on "India Today." In short, the *Chronicle* long ago established itself as a successful barker. The people are in the tent. Now the *Chronicle* must decide whether they are to be offered escapism, or something more.

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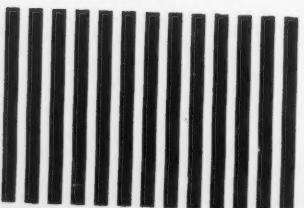
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NAT HENTOFF

## The Times as a story: is it all there?

In Gay Talese's "history as multiple portraiture . . . the subject of journalism does arise from time to time." An essay review.

■ It could be the title of a novel—*The Kingdom and the Power/The Story of the Men Who Influence the Institution That Influences the World* (World, New York and Cleveland, \$10). And Gay Talese's history-as-multiple-portraiture does indeed read like a novel. Quite deliberately. "This book is written like a novel," Talese emphasized in the April, 1969, issue of *Esquire*. "I've interviewed several hundred people, many of them on a dozen occasions. I don't ask people what they said. I ask them what they said and thought, where they were. Then I ask the same questions of everyone else who was present until I've assembled the scene, the thoughts, the conversation, the surroundings. What people say, after all, is not necessarily what they think or believe."

On one level, it works. The book is highly readable, which largely explains its high sales. A felicitous stylist with a sophisticated sense of color and rhythm that made him one of the *Times'* few distinctive writers during his ten years on that paper's staff, Talese has constructed a smooth, multi-layered narrative. Through

flashbacks, intercutting, and swift but crisply detailed profiles, Talese has fused the odyssey of the Ochs family with accounts of the incessant border warfare among the dukes within the kingdom. The result is what might have been, in other days, an expensively mounted, sprawling MGM movie. For example, because the founder of the kingdom had once been a printer's devil on the Knoxville *Chronicle*, "in the Nineteen-sixties, during a newspaper strike in New York, picket lines of printers would respectfully part ranks, forming a path whenever Ochs's white-haired daughter, Iphigene, then in her seventies, would approach the front entrance of the New York Times building."

Meanwhile, in the executive suite, among the retainers, plots and counterplots pyramid so that one marvels that there is energy left to get the paper out. One such imbroglio, as bitter though not as literally bloody as those once endemic to Italian city-states, forms the climax of the book—the attempted coup by the suzerains of New York (Clifton Daniel and A. M. Rosenthal) to replace Tom Wicker as head of the Washington bureau with one of their own, James Greenfield. But they underestimate the jousting prowess of James Reston, a bonny Wicker ally, and the appointment is rescinded. The humiliated Greenfield turns to Rosenthal, and says, "Abe, do me

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a favor. Abe, don't ever ask me to come into this place again."

But this is not a novel or a movie. These combatants are real, and so the story goes on even after the book itself is done. This past summer, Rosenthal, remounted, became managing editor and soon after, James Greenfield, his armor refurbished, not only came into that place again but marched in as foreign editor of the kingdom.

The book is a spiral of fascinating tales and should be irresistible to journalists as well as to those in high and medium places who, if the sums of daily reading time were added, spend a considerable part of their lives in the linear company of the writers and editors who, along with the royal family, *are* the book. But this spiral, alas, is also a weakness for those who might want to know more about the *Times* as a power in the country, the *Times* as a newspaper. The affairs of the kingdom are detailed with brisk, often amused aplomb; but the paper's reason for being—and the extent to which it fulfills its high purposes—are blurred in the rush of personalities. As Joseph Epstein notes in *Commentary* [September, 1969], "In Talese's long, involuted account of the struggles of these men for power, what is dismaying is how little those struggles have to do with any serious intellectual issues or questions of journalistic quality." But is that the fault of the protagonists or of the chronicler? On the evidence at hand, Talese is himself much less drawn to considerations of serious journalism than he is to the mores of the principal inhabitants of the realm.

The subject of journalism itself does arise from time to time. "Ideally," Talese writes, "The *Times* desired no opinions within its news columns, restricting opinion to its editorial page. Realistically, this was not possible. The editors' opinions and tastes were imposed every day within the news—either by the space they allotted for a certain story, or the position they assigned to it, or the headline they ordered for it, and also by the stories they did not print, or printed for only one edition or edited heavily, or held out for a few days and then printed in the back of the thick Sunday edition between girdle advertisements and

dozens of Bachrach photographs of pretty girls just engaged."

He is, of course, correct, but there is so little analysis, or just plain information on the *processes* of news selection, placement, and interpretation. What are the criteria for deciding? Are there consistent criteria? If not, why not? It wasn't, for instance, until Sept. 14, 1969, that readers of the *Times* were informed in a Sunday book review by Harvard University Law School Professor Alan Dershowitz that the trial of Dr. Benjamin Spock and his co-defendants was a deliberate attempt by the Government to intimidate dissent and for that among other reasons, in Dershowitz's words, was "a national disgrace." While the trial was on, more than a year before, the readers of the *Washington Post* knew this, through the work of reporter Jack MacKenzie. But the *Times'* coverage of the indictment and the trial was desultory in news terms and quite wrong-headed editorially.

Spock and the others were charged with conspiracy, thereby severely limiting their procedural safeguards and also, as Dershowitz points out, enabling the Government to "cast a wide net and threaten an even wider one." However, as Jessica Mitford states in her book, *The Trial of Dr. Spock*, "The New York *Times*, in an editorial published shortly after the indictment, boldly *misstates* the charge, saying the five are accused of counseling young men to violate the draft. Nowhere, in seven paragraphs, does the editorial mention conspiracy. Proceeding from this wrong premise, the *Times* concludes: 'The legal challenge to the draft and the war which has been posed by the actions of Dr. Spock and others belongs in the courts where it has been placed by the federal indictments. The moral questions raised by the far-reaching acts of deeply troubled citizens are matters of concern for every American.' "

James Reston, as Miss Mitford documents, made the same mistake. "The Government," she writes, "never intended that there should be a 'reassessment of the Vietnam war or a 'legal challenge to the draft and the war'; it took care to avoid bringing 'the fundamental philosophical issue of the Vietnam war into the courts' [Res-

ton's phrase]; the indictment is specifically tailored to avoid 'the basic question, Is the war not only legally but morally right?' " [Reston's term again.] Had the Government charged the defendants with 'counseling, aiding, and abetting,' there could have been a fighting chance of the confrontation sought by the defendants on the issue of the legality of the war and hence of the draft law. Instead, the Government reached for the shabbiest weapon in the prosecutor's arsenal: the conspiracy charge."

What went wrong? Why did John Oakes, head of the editorial page, and Reston fail to understand what was happening? Why was the reporting from Boston so flaccid? How uncommon an occurrence was this? How likely is such a misjudgment—and the corollary misinforming of the readers—to happen again? It is almost impossible to begin to answer these questions from what Talese tells us of decision-making and internal review at the *Times*.

Or, for another illustration, why is the *Times'* coverage of the drug industry—and its manifold abuses—so intermittent and shallow? By contrast, Morton Mintz of the *Washington Post* covers that beat with formidable diligence and knowledgability. Mintz has a copious file of discoveries that never made the *Times* or were buried or were far from adequately interpreted. Who at the *Times* is responsible for such chronic carelessness in this area? Or is anyone responsible? With all of the sprightly detail about the infighting between the *Times'* Washington and New York fiefdoms, Talese makes no substantial attempt to explore how and why stories are selected, pursued, ignored, neglected.

In New York City, where the *Times* has so many reporters at its disposal, educational coverage for the past ten years has been largely superficial. The work of Elliott Shapiro, Caleb Gattegno, Dr. Seymour Gang, and other diverse innovators in both private and public schools is covered, if at all, only sparsely as spot news. The issues at stake in Ocean Hill-Brownsville—and what was happening there *educationally* during the 1968 teachers' strikes—were much more clearly and fully examined in the *Wall Street Journal* and other publications than in the *Times*. Or,

on the labor beat, since A. H. Raskin joined the Editorial Board, the reporting has been fragmented and often askew.

The system of "justice" in the city—particularly in the lower criminal courts—is Dickensian in nature and in its effect on the lives of the poor; but there is no consistent, analytic coverage of these conditions and the men and institutional forces responsible for them. A very occasional story on the "forgotten men" in the Tombs, or on a typical day in the life of one of the few relatively civilized judges, is simply not enough. Not for a paper with the pretensions—and often the accomplishments in other areas—of the *Times*.

Why is the *Times'* coverage of New York City so uneven? There is hardly a clue in Talese's book. Nor is there anything close to George Lichtheim's depth and quality of analysis of the *Times'* foreign coverage, in "All the News That's Fit to Print" in the September, 1965, *Commentary*. Consider the differences in scope and interpretative skills between the *Times'* foreign news and that found in *The Economist* or even in the weekly, eight-page English-language edition of *Le Monde*. *The Kingdom and the Power* abounds in beguiling accounts of the personal characteristics of the *Times'* foreign staff, but the criteria for foreign news selection and follow-up assignments are left almost entirely blank.

As for national news, one of the most comprehensive explanations of how "the military-industrial complex" actually functions—and how it secures its growth—did appear in the *Times*. It was, however, an article in the *Times Magazine* this past June by Richard Kaufman, an economist on the staff of the Congressional Subcommittee on Economy in Government. Day-to-day reporting by *Times* men on what is, after all, a crucial ongoing story can hardly be characterized as penetrating or especially diligent. Who is responsible for this lapse? Again, is anybody responsible? What do the reporters think? We shall have to look elsewhere than in Talese's book.

There are two brief critiques by reporters of the restraints and frustrations under which they operate—an excerpt from an interoffice memorandum by political correspondent David Broder after he resigned in 1966 to join the Washington

*Post*, and a plaint from an unnamed *Times* man who was trying to explore deeply into, among other matters, the Senate ethics committee's investigation of Senator Thomas Dodd. The documents are tantalizingly revealing so far as they go, but Talese does not pursue these intriguing leads to the inner functioning of the *Times*. Of a different order of tantalization is the flat assertion that for an unspecified period a "quiet clerk in the telegraph room" was, unknown to the *Times*, "employed by the CIA." For what purpose? How did Talese find out? What was management's reaction? The clerk never reappears.

The book is of small help in explicating the *Times* as a newspaper—how it runs as distinct from the personal habits of those who run it. After all, as Ben Bagdikian noted in his review of *The Kingdom and the Power* in the *Times* itself [June 8, 1969], "there is more to judgments of journalists than bedmates or haberdashers." Or than keeping score of the plotting behind the arras. The two men whose work at the *Times* I most admire—Tom Wicker and Harrison Salisbury—must have all kinds of ideas about serious journalism, with specific reference to the *Times*, but Talese tells us much more about their personalities than their commitments.

He is more successful in evoking the *Times'* atmosphere, thereby explaining why an increasing number of the more self-demanding reporters leave the *Times*. "Each step up, it seemed, cost the individual a part of himself. With greater power went greater responsibility, more caution, more modesty, less freedom . . . . The *Times* had seemed to become a much less personal place in recent years, more coolly corporate as it had grown larger and more important . . ." And David Halberstam, who was later to leave the *Times* for more space, time, and freedom at *Harper's*, writes from Paris about a conversation with Charlotte Curtis: ". . . she kept telling me that newspaper writing was the only way to write and I kept insisting that if you stay with it you hit a point of no return, your talent levels out and eventually diminishes, and that you retire without even knowing it . . . ."

Is that ineluctably true for all newspapermen? For most, and certainly not only on the *Times*—

the way newspapers are still run. There are, of course, exceptions. Wicker and Salisbury have maintained a considerable degree of independence—Wicker through his column and Salisbury through his far-ranging assignments, propelled through his own initiative, persistence, and undiminished curiosity. Wicker, as Halberstam once told me, remains so awake and challenging because "he never lost his sense of rage." Salisbury is still so perceptive and rewarding a reporter because of his undiminished conviction that if you dig long and hard enough, there is no end to what you can find.

But as the *Times* keeps getting bigger and more corporate-cool, there are exceedingly few slots for future Wickers and Salisburys. I would not be surprised to see such of the best of the younger men as Anthony Lukas, John Kifner, and Steven Roberts leave sooner rather than later, unless there is a radical—I use the word denotatively—re-evaluation at the *Times* of the nature of news coverage in the global village. To start, more reporters should be taken off regular beats and given the time—singly or in teams—to really develop stories. (The *Wall Street Journal* keeps proving how substantial the results of this can be as its feature and investigative reporting, on the average, continues to excel the *Times*).

More fundamentally, as James Reston has frequently said (and Talese quotes from one such speech), "We are not covering the news of the mind as we should; we minimize the conflicts of ideas and emphasize the conflict in the streets." One of Reston's remedies for this journalistic malaise is to invite outside intellectuals to write in the daily paper, not only in the *Times Magazine*. It could help, if the range of writers chosen were wide enough. We all pretty much know what John Galbraith and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., think, but occasional daily appearances by Carl Oglesby, Andrew Kopkind, I. F. Stone, and some conservative probers—once any of quality are found—could make a difference.

But what of the staff reporters? Reston has said that he is considering asking some writers how they would feel about writing for the *Times* only part of each year. The rest of the time,

they could, if they liked, write fiction, study, or otherwise replenish themselves. That, too, might help, but it still doesn't cope with the fundamental question of what a daily paper at the end of the twentieth century should be.

"The traditional Ochs' concept of *more* of everything," Reston recognizes, "just won't do any more. It makes for a stuffy paper, and if we were really to adhere to that credo in any comprehensive way, we'd have to put out a 500-page daily paper."

The answer, then—or the beginning of the answer—is a paper with a great deal more flexibility than the *Times* and other dailies now allow themselves: a paper, for example, with room for long but incisively written series when necessary—as on the military-industrial-labor complex, on how judges are chosen and how they function throughout the country, on the kinds of new learning situations adumbrated in Harold Taylor's *Students without Teachers*, and on any number of areas in which the *news* is in the process of becoming, rather than events which have already taken place, explosively or otherwise. But this requires men with a deeper comprehension than has been customary in the *Times'* bullpen and in editorial echelons above them. And who is to find these men and make the requisite changes? "Punch" Sulzberger? It hardly seems likely on the basis of his record so far, but he is young and unrigid enough to perhaps surprise us all.

Also necessary is the final burying of the always untrue but opaquely stubborn notion that a newspaper is a mirror. In reviewing Talese's book in *Newsweek* [July 21, 1969], Geoffrey Wolff becomes the proto-typical spokesman for this absurd, looking-backward concept of a newspaper: ". . . the *Times* is chained to great events and can do little more than reflect them. It serves as a mirror; its function is its limitation."

Nonsense! Every paper of any quality, certainly including the *Times*, has disproved this empty adage again and again. Was the *Times* chained to events or did it help shape events—in the process of *really* informing its readers—through David Halberstam's reporting from South Vietnam, Harrison Salisbury's from Hanoi, Homer Bigart's from Appalachia? Conversely, the

*Times'* single most serious breach of responsibility to its readers was its failure to print all it knew about American plans to invade Cuba. Talese reports that conflict within the *Times* in some detail.

"If we had printed the original story," Reston has observed, "and the invasion had been a disaster, we would have been blamed for it. If we had printed the story, and the invasion, as a result, had been scrubbed out, we would have been blamed for having interfered with executive decision-making." But there are times—and this was one of them—when a paper must make itself vulnerable to blame, because its overriding purpose is to inform its readers. The *Times*, like every other daily in America, has not made itself vulnerable *enough* to this kind of "blame"—from local, state, and federal government; from the military-industrial-labor complex; from police and prosecution personnel; from insular college faculties; and on and on. It is at its best—in this period of history when interpretation is so vitally needed amid an incessant onslaught of "information"—when it does. When Reston, for instance, writes [Aug. 27, 1969] of the near mutiny of Company A in Vietnam as he makes a direct attack on the President:

"He is asking Company A to fight for time to negotiate a settlement with Hanoi that will save his face but may very well lose their lives. He is also carrying on the battle in the belief, or pretense, that the South Vietnamese will really be able to defend their country and our democratic objectives when we withdraw, and even his own generals don't believe the South Vietnamese will do it. It is a typical political strategy and the really surprising thing is that there have been so few men, like the tattered remnants of Company A, who have refused to die for it."

It may be that the Administration of Richard Nixon will propel the *Times*—both on its editorial page and in its news columns—to be less chained to events and more and more of an interpretative, hard-digging newspaper. It is true, as Talese notes, that in the past the *Times*, as a power among powers, seldom broke the rules of the game. The paper, or its columnists, might argue with rulers of other institutions, governmental

and private, but hardly ever in muckraking style, hardly ever in confrontation. Tone was important, both as a reflection of the paper's own class and as a testament to the shared basic interests of all in power—except for certified scoundrels.

As Talese writes, "it was neither coincidental nor surprising that the *New York Times* as a whole would reflect, in miniature, the collective style of the Government because the two institutions at the top are shaped by the same forces historically, socially, and economically—what happens to the Government inevitably happens to the *Times*. Should the United States continue as a preeminent power, the *Times'* words will continue to carry weight in the world. Should the United States decline as an international influence, so will the *New York Times*—following the wake of *The Times* of London, which today does not thunder across the sea as it did during the glorious days of the British Empire."

But if the world should be blown up, what readers would be left? This is the Government of Richard Nixon and the ABM and the MIRV. This is the Government of John Mitchell, upon whose decision I would not want to rest the ratification of the Bill of Rights. This is the Government of the quintessential "pragmatists"—Robert Finch being a classic model—at a time when the young and the minorities have quite literally no more patience with callousness and deviousness under the guise of "realist."

Is it true that "what happens to the Government inevitably happens to the *Times*?" The question should bring a chill to 43rd Street. We are into a time of severe testing of all institutions, not the least of them the *New York Times*. The need to change, to open up to the future, can no longer be glossed in rhetoric. If the *Times* can still be characterized in 2001 as "coolly corporate," it will have frozen into a relic. Genus: newspaper, twentieth century; delusory rubric—"All the News That's Fit to Print."

Reston is right. It is not "more" of everything that is needed. It is why. And how. And what are the alternatives? And what are the processes at work? That's the news that's fit to print, and it's far from all there in the *Times*, or alas, in *The Kingdom and the Power*.

## View from the right

ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS: A Critical Analysis of the News and Editorial Content of The New York Times. By Herman H. Dinsmore. Arlington House. \$7.

□ The good gray *Times* of Ochs and the elder Sulzberger, Herman Dinsmore contends, has turned a misty shade of pink under recent management. The newspaper "slants and curves the news" Leftward and "takes tenaciously neutral editorial positions toward the Cold War."

As a former *Times* deskman and onetime editor of the now-defunct *Times* international edition, Dinsmore should be equipped to cite chapter and verse on the *Times'* sins as he viewed them from the Right. But Dinsmore writes like an outsider—just another outsider with an ideological axe to grind.

His resurrection of the *Times'* less coherent editorials on Vietnam or the Arab-Israeli conflict provide a gleam or two of irony. But the central line is as predictable as *National Review* (or, mirror-image, *New Republic*): The *Times* built up Castro, backed a no-win policy in Korea, glossed over Eastern Europe's harsh realities, took a rose-colored view of Soviet intentions, deplored anti-Communism abroad, and found abhorrent any thought of allied success in Vietnam.

At great length, Dinsmore suggests that John Oakes' editorial page biases have influenced the *Times'* coverage and play of Vietnam news. He attempts to show, largely through quotations from non-*Times* sources, that *Times* reporters exaggerated the Buddhist threat in 1966 and that Harrison Salisbury was duped in Hanoi in 1967. But, if only for lack of documentation, this argument, like most of the others in the book, remains unconvincing. As "critical analysis," Dinsmore hands us muddled polemics. The *Times* deserves better.

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## Books

### The two men who were Murrow

ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON

PRIME TIME: The Life of Edward R. Murrow. By Alexander Kendrick. Little Brown. \$8.95.

■ This is a strange book. Written by a Murrow disciple, in the approved CBS News style—"subjective-objective" analytical yet not editorial—about the paradoxical Edward R. Murrow, it ought to be a moving experience to read. Yet it is not. Why? It seems to accept as inevitable the triumph of broadcasting's corporate-conglomerate Establishment over the man who more than any other in the industry came to symbolize the keeping of its conscience. The book ends with the sentences: "Ed Murrow was dead. *The Beverly Hillbillies* lived on." Preceding this Kendrick writes: "Year after year it would be a familiar story."

Murrow never accepted; he continued to fight to the end of his capacity. He was a lifesize hero, and he had his faults, his confusions, his uncertainties. Kendrick, with his sympathies strongly in Murrow's corner, tries fairly to include them in the record. But underneath Murrow's cool, professionally understated style burned the fire of a preacher who could never fail to cry outrage where his open eye and decent instincts found it. Kendrick is no defender of the status quo; his first chapter is an overview of the impersonal, modern giantism of CBS which cast out Murrow as an undigestible irritant. Throughout the book he tilts at the network brass, but

he handles William S. Paley and Frank Stanton circumspectly. One gets the sense of an irresistible determinism, devoid of human choice points, sweeping everything before it. Murrow was at his best when he took aim at individuals, not institutions.

The best chapters are the ones depicting the early and latter days of Murrow. Those are the times less known to professionals, for whom the middle years of the war and 485 Madison Avenue are more or less familiar. What Kendrick contributes in the early days is very important—the reporter-preacher syndrome. Murrow's mother wanted him to enter the ministry. Once his career was established, her son liked to think of himself as a reporter. Actually, he was both, as his wartime letters to his family reveal; and he was happiest when he was both preaching and reporting at the same time, particularly in his broadcasts to the United States from London during the Nazi air blitz.

England's finest hour was also his: his pulpit was a fiery epic, civilization being smashed, and he marvelously caught the minutiae and the greatness of courage and sacrifice. After the war—though he and his colleagues couldn't know it at the time—all was anticlimax. True, there was the McCarthy battle, and Murrow the preacher of *See It Now*; but by then he had lost the whole-hearted support of his archbishops—he was a prestigious thorn in their side—and his congregation was divided, as the heat of the war against fascism turned to the ice of the war against communism. CBS wanted him reporting, not preaching in American pulpits of the air, but Murrow couldn't report without political and sociological overtones, which—in spite of his lack of faith—were essentially manifestations of a religious spirit, nurtured by his parents.

Murrow kept fighting to preach and report, and CBS kept pushing to "unfrock their bishop." They even made him a worldly vice president, and later he couldn't resist the Satanic temptation to be a member of the board of directors. But he couldn't stand the first very long, and Kendrick tells us that he never took the second very seriously. In the end, when CBS took away his pulpit and he went to the USIA

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as its director, the Government wouldn't even let him report honestly. President Kennedy made some show of letting him influence policy, but when Lyndon Johnson came to the White House, he made no bones about wanting a propagandist, not a reporter, in America's chief information post.

Kendrick also does a service by laying the ghost of the golden days of radio news before World War II. He notes that when Murrow and Cesar Saerchinger represented CBS in Europe, they proposed emergent Nazi chieftans to the network for overseas talks. Saerchinger got Hitler to agree to talk for \$1,500, but CBS cabled back: *UNWANTED HITLER AT ANY PRICE*. Later, Murrow got an *UNWANTED RIBBENTROP* cable. Both CBS and NBC were more interested in overseas broadcasts of singing mice, nightingales in Kent, and vaudeville acts. "News" meant entertainment, and when Austria and Munich became serious entertainment, news became important; it rose and fell in importance thereafter according to the networks' judgment of listener attraction. It took some time for all to realize that even World War II represented a false armistice between the values of broadcast managements and serious journalists, but eventually the showdown came.

Kendrick doesn't spare his hero's weaknesses as he tells of the Murrow-Shirer dispute over the independence and stature of a network commentator—in which Murrow, to the surprise of many of his colleagues, took an un-Murrowish position alongside management. The *Person to Person* show made Murrow popular with non-news audiences, but it hardly advanced his fundamental purposes. He regretted doing a "nightmarish" article, in a *Collier's* magazine symposium, in which he described a future, imaginary atomic bomb attack that destroyed Moscow in a Soviet-American war. Kendrick lays on the line Murrow's decidedly uncharacteristic move, as director of the USIA, to get the BBC to kill a re-broadcast of the brilliant Murrow-Friendly *Harvest of Shame* exposé, although he explains that Murrow was at the time under the Congressional gun for confirmation in the Government post. His participation in the counter-insurgency goals of the Kennedy Administration also is con-

tradictory, as were his efforts to influence the production of films and TV documentaries for USIA purposes. But he gets his full glory for the McCarthy win, and for his defense of J. Robert Oppenheimer, as well as for his warm-hearted, generous help to old friends who were hurt by the blacklisting scourge.

The book erroneously credits NBC (it should be ABC) for the Churchill television memoirs. The genesis of the postwar documentary radio unit that Murrow founded at CBS is inaccurately and inadequately reported, considering the importance that Murrow himself attached to it. Since he is writing Murrow's story, it is understandable that the author ignores entirely the Stateside development of radio news and public affairs broadcasting during the war. One gets the wrong impression that Murrow all by himself somehow established the authentic tradition abroad. The account of his draft proposal for a fourth, noncommercial network (prepared at the invitation of the Ford Foundation, after he had given up all hope of the reform of the commercial networks from within, from the top down, *noblesse oblige*) ignores completely the dedicated, unsung labors of a small group of pioneers among the educational broadcasters, who labored for a generation to build the foundations of public broadcasting in the United States.

Kendrick never tries to answer the "why" of the Murrow paradox. The best clue this reader could infer is the reporter-preacher ambivalence. If only CBS had let him do both when he returned home, Murrow's life would have been different. One suspects that all his contradictions, his rebellions, flights, and wrong moves stemmed from this dividing asunder of his two essential selves. He fought manfully for his wholeness and lost, but to his lasting credit and universal significance, he never bowed to injustice or defeat. Kendrick reports well—he is often overlong on chronology and short on viewpoint—but the "fire in the belly" is missing. Thus Kendrick's work is valuable as the first full marshalling of the facts of Murrow's life, but in its failure to stir the heart and mind it misses the essence of Edward R. Murrow's paradoxically quixotic adventure.

## Books noted

MENCKEN. By Carl Bode. Southern Illinois University Press. \$10.

□ The Nixon Era, featuring Billy Graham sermonizing in the White House, the Hon. Spiro Agnew spouting platitudes more gorgeous than those of "the sainted Gamaliel," an Attorney General who brings to the Justice Department all the solemn reverence for justice of Wall Street, and a head man who sprays a *Reader's Digest* rectitude over the whole, may yet bring H. L. Mencken back from the grave.

H. L., as Carl Bode's meaty biography makes clear, achieved his greatest triumphs in an era of imbecility not unlike the one now looming, and since our journalism seems incapable of reproducing him we may have to settle for resurrection. If there is to be a Mencken revival (and today's youth should find him an elixir that could even revive laughter), Bode's *Mencken* is enough to launch it. The author is, to be sure, a professor of English at the University of Maryland, and occasionally displays the kind of murky writing, addiction to repetition, and fusty adulation that H. L. lampooned as the scribblings of a pedant; but he has done his homework more thoroughly than any of the half-dozen Mencken biographers before him.

Mencken's hatred of pretense and cant, his unerring instinct for the outrageous truth (who but H. L. could dismiss William Dean Howells as "a somewhat kittenish old maid—in brief, a giggler"), his unholy joy in exposing Puritans and yahoos alike, all stemmed from the education he drew from newspapering in Baltimore. The man who wrote analyses of Shaw and Nietzsche, made the *Smart Set* and then the *American Mercury* the brightest lights of their day, fostered the new realism in literature, blazed a trail all his own in *The American Language* through successive editions, and vastly enriched that language himself, remained—first and last, as he said—a newspaperman. Let city rooms across the land take to Carl Bode's *Mencken*, and let the denizens meditate well.

LOUIS M. STARR

THE ALFRED I. duPONT-COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SURVEY OF BROADCAST JOURNALISM FOR 1968-69. Bantam and Grosset & Dunlap. \$5.95. hardcover, \$1.95 softcover.

□ A pioneer volume in a projected annual series, this well edited, well documented survey chronicles the year in broadcast journalism—local and national—in connection with prestige awards for outstanding accomplishments in the field. Chapters include Broadcast and the Elections, Government and Broadcast Journalism, Broadcast Journalism and Advertising, and a commentary by former BBC Director General Sir William Haley on News and Documentaries.

WALTER LIPPmann: Philosopher-Journalist. By Edward L. and Frederick H. Schapsmeier. Public Affairs Press. \$5.

□ Here is an even-handed appraisal to be added to the substantial shelf of books on Mr. Lippmann, by a team of twin brothers who teach history in the Midwest. They remind us that Lippmann got his start in journalism as Lincoln Steffens' apprentice on *Everybody's* in 1912, and follow their man through all his mutations in the ensuing fifty-six years, including his falling out with Lyndon B. Johnson.

THE SELLING OF THE PRESIDENT 1968. By Joe McGinniss. Trident Press. \$5.95.

□ When advertising, public relations, and other image-making gurus planned the merchandising strategy for Richard Nixon's campaign, former Philadelphia *Inquirer* columnist Joe McGinniss was there, under the sole constraint that he speak only after the election. Now he reports all, including dialogue, memos, and scripts, providing a valuable vignette in the marital history of politics and the mass media.

THE GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS: The Story of Colonel John Bayne Maclean and the Publishing Empire He Founded. By Floyd S. Chalmers. Doubleday. \$7.95.

□ The late founder of Canada's great Maclean-Hunter communications empire is portrayed in all his brilliance, dynamism, and eccentricity by a longtime friend and business associate who retires this year as M-H chairman. A family tree of properties, from early trade magazines through *Maclean's* and radio-TV outlets, is included.

## Notes on the art

### Retouching: making pictures lie?

■ News photos should have intrinsic integrity. They are supposed to directly represent an event or scene. But on many daily newspapers, the photographic image takes a circuitous route through lens to darkroom, past editors' hands to a retouch artist's desk before reaching the engraver and eventually the press. Any of these steps can warp the image, but none is more hazardous than the retoucher's table.

In most instances, retouching is forced on editors by limitations of photo-mechanical reproduction. Engraving, stereotyping, and fast rotary-press printing often conspire to obscure detail. A sharp print can look dim on a page proof—and equal a fog scene after coming off a press at 70,000 copies an hour. Skilled engravers and pressmen can help preserve definition, but the rescue work often starts with the artist and his airbrushes that exaggerate detail and tones.

How much retouching is necessary? How much is ethical? In a survey of fifty-three publications—newspapers, magazines and news services—among the thirty-five which replied I found almost unanimous agreement that the less retouching, the better. But there was no consensus on what minimum retouching should be. *The*

*Christian Science Monitor*, for example, expressed a "very firm preference" against any retouching. "The dangers and pitfalls of retouching have always been more impressive to us than any advantages," said Courtney R. Sheldon, managing editor. "It sometimes brings into question the credibility of the picture." But Theron C. Liddle, managing editor of the *Deseret News* in Salt Lake City, reflected the majority opinion among editors sampled when he said: "We have ample evidence to show that GOOD retouching is considerably better than NO retouching."

Some editors impose strict prohibitions. For example, said Frank Dosse, executive assistant in the news departments of the Minneapolis *Star* and Minneapolis *Tribune*, "The *Tribune* has an absolute prohibition against retouching a photograph except by order of the news editor. The *Star* has a picture editor who works closely with the senior artist in determining what retouching is necessary." Kenneth W. Harter, assistant managing editor of the *Washington Post*, insisted that what is retouched "is for the purpose of getting the best contrast possible in front of the engraving camera, so the highlights

can be held when the picture is turned into metal . . . to give readers the exact image produced by the photographer." The consensus was that if the photo can't be retouched so that the art work doesn't show, there should be no retouching, or even no picture.

Despite their strict retouching policy, the Minneapolis newspapers do not object to retouching "distractions which mar the photo's integrity in reporting the event," said Dosse. "A simple example would be a youngster mugging behind the blanket-covered body of an accident victim and becoming the focal point of the picture." Many editors expressed a preference for airbrushing a neutral tone into the background of one-column head photos to provide contrast. Other mechanical flaws cited as needing correction ranged from scratched negatives to bad lighting. Editors also said they were occasionally faced with a wirephoto that got a rough ride on the wire.

Of some 100 pictures transmitted by Associated Press daily, seven to ten have been retouched, according to Harold G. Buell, executive newsphoto editor. "Sometimes, due to transmission difficulties, we retouch a photo to repair damage done by atmospheric or line interference," he said. The AP also retouches if separation between subject and background is required, and sometimes as a matter of taste—"firemen rescuing people in revealing night clothes, for example."

Some newspapers routinely improve the facial features of women's photographs that appear in their society page. In the case of the *Deseret News*, for example, "a little cosmetology is applied to the faces of middle-aged club women to soften wrinkles and de-emphasize double chins."

Another realm of retouching involves condensing a picture to fit a column width. Tom McRae, managing editor of the Atlanta *Constitution*, said, "Occasionally when a print comes up from the photo department with three or four people in it, and they are widely separated, our chief artist, an expert with a razor, will bring them closer together. We have never got a complaint. Of course, if the people were hostile to each other, we would never bring them closer together." But Louisville's Robert Clark declared, "We do not retouch or change pictures for purposes of making them fit better into the makeup—and by this I mean reversing a picture, cutting it apart

to bring figures closer together, and the like. We feel this is tampering with the truth."

When two separate pictures are pasted together to form a montage, several editors indicated that ethics demand telling the reader. "And letting the reader know doesn't sound as damn shaking as some editors might think," said Robert D. DePianto, illustrations editor of

World Book Encyclopedia Science Service, Inc. "If you explain what was done, and let the caption explain it as a picture of symbolic value, not visually factual, the reader will have deeper respect for the paper."

Not many years ago, of course, such concerns would have been dismissed as picayunish, if not puritanical. Photographic hoaxes were

#### Sikkim Border War Flares Up

### Another Sino-Indian Battle

NEW DELHI, INDIA, 2/19/69 — Indian troops defending the tiny Himalayan kingdom of Sikkim fought a day-long artillery and mortar battle with Communist Chinese border forces yesterday.

Both sides reported an unspecified number of casualties before the fighting was halted by a truce that ended in and remained valid.

#### UNPROVOKED

Indo-Pak Major M. S. Lalwani, Major M. S. Lalwani, said the Chinese had started the war as an unprovoked renewal of the mountain border fighting Indian and Chinese troops clashed in the same area less than three weeks ago.

Communist China blamed India for the new battle. A Peking



"Tense moment" on the Sikkim-Chinese border (Washington Daily News), or "friendly hijinks," Life, depending on the photographer's angle or the caption writer's whim?



Variable-length mini-skirt: (left) Washington Star; (right) New York Times.

History from Apollo 7: (from top) revisionist (Washington Star), more revisionist (Chicago Tribune), and most revisionist (Washington Post).

commonplace, particularly in the tabloids—where the zealous retoucher was indispensable. Totalitarian regimes on occasion still rely heavily on photo fakery. But in U.S. newspapers such deception probably is at an alltime low, in part due to editors' enhanced sense of professionalism, in part to a more sophisticated public abundantly supplied with competing media as cross-checks.

Nonetheless, transgressions persist. Some are achieved through careless (or intentional) distortion of caption material. [See accompanying photo along the Chinese border, either "friendly hijinks" or a "tense moment," depending on the captions.] Others involve bowdlerizing photographs [see variable-length mini-skirt, *New York Times* and *Washington Star*.] As various

trade publications have reported, however, retouching of this nature now probably is most prevalent in display advertisements for movies.

Given the realities of wirephoto transmission, newspaper printing mechanics, and available photographic reproduction talent, the retouching division of art departments may never be dispensed with completely. But dependence upon it certainly can be reduced. In recent years, for example, the Louisville *Courier-Journal* and *Times* both have made a concerted effort to improve engraving processes to secure heretofore unattainable definition to gray tones. Both newspapers, moreover, have converted photographic staffs to the exclusive use of 35mm film and begun a campaign to achieve "unposed" photography through use of fast

films. "This has largely been successful," said George Gill, *Courier-Journal* managing editor, "and has eliminated much of the previous need to retouch. If one frame on the 35 roll isn't useable without retouching, chances are the frame next to it is, because our photographers tend, if anything, to 'overshoot' using 35 fast film with natural light. If the picture won't make it without a lot of retouching, then it simply doesn't make it."

In short, technical problems may best be solved by concern for photography and reproduction, not retouching. And taste and policy questions, by plain professionalism and honesty.

LAWRENCE A. PRYOR  
LOS ANGELES TIMES

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#### Passing Comment • *Continued from page 4*

programs for minority groups at the Washington (D.C.) Journalism Center, directed by Julius Duscha; at the Reporters' News Syndicate, directed by Robert Spivak, also in Washington; and at the *Afro-American* newspapers in Richmond, Baltimore, and Washington, under a grant to the Virginia Council on Human Relations. In addition, in New York Ford has funded a Community News Service, organized by the Center for New York City Affairs of the New School for Social Research, and a Communications Skills Bank at the New York Urban Coalition.

The CNS offers daily wire coverage of the inner city by blacks and Puerto Ricans. The Skills Bank maintains a talent registry and offers counseling and placement help to minority-group members seeking media employment. Stuart Dim, former *Newsday* assistant managing editor, is director; inquiries should be addressed to 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10003.

#### Darts and laurels

**Dart:** To all media which publicized McClellan Committee charges against the Rev. John Fry of Chicago for his church's alleged improprieties in connection with the Blackstone Rangers—and then did not headline his September 17 exoneration by a blue-ribbon Chicago Presbytery investigating committee.

**Laurel:** To *Newsweek* for titling its October 6 report on the white lower-middle class "The Troubled American" instead of the more politically popular—but inaccurate and offensive—"Forgotten American." As the white-oriented press too easily forgets, no white American, regardless of his very real grievances, yet is as "forgotten" as the nonwhite American.

## Unfinished business

### Oil Shale's Burial

#### TO THE REVIEW:

I read with interest J. R. Freeman's discussion of the useful if somewhat tardy report on the Colorado shale oil situation by Chris Welles in *Harper's* [Summer, 1969].

As an editor I know that the *Review's* staff can hardly be expected to have read, and to remember, all that has been written, but I am surprised that one who combines Mr. Freeman's presumable deep familiarity with the subject and his implied chastisement of the rest of journalism for neglecting a possible national scandal should have neglected to mention the thorough report on the case by Julius Duscha in the *Atlantic* of March, 1966, over two years before Chris Welles crossed the Hudson to discover Colorado and sent his after-life manuscript to *Harper's*.

For the sake of fairness or thoroughness, Freeman also ought to have given recognition to Jerry Landauer's important coverage of the case in the *Wall Street Journal*.

ROBERT MANNING  
Editor in Chief  
The Atlantic Monthly  
Boston.

#### TO THE REVIEW:

J. R. Freeman's account of *Life* magazine's refusal to publish my staff article on oil shale reveals several misconceptions, possibly due to his special viewpoint.

For the past three years, he has been writing and lecturing about what he considers to be a vast, well organized conspiracy of corrupt Department of Interior officials and ruthless oil industry executives who have been engaged in a Teapot Dome-like "giveaway" of public oil shale land. He tends to view everything about oil shale as related to

the alleged conspiracy's ubiquitous, multi-faceted machinations. Consequently, he concludes that my story, which discussed his giveaway charges in detail, must have been killed by pressure from oil industry advertisers acting on orders from then Interior Secretary Stewart Udall. Udall, Freeman claims, "did not want the oil shale scandal given wide publicity."

In fact, through eight partial and complete rewrites of my article for *Life's* editors, I never discerned the slightest sensitivity over that part of the story dealing with the giveaways—I was actually quite critical of many of Freeman's contentions, especially his rather vituperative castigation of Stewart Udall. Considerable sensitivity did exist, however, over the other major thrust of my story, which incidentally I developed independently of Freeman's "voluminous" files. This was the oil industry's opposition to commercial production of oil from shale, in part because of fears the output might become competitive with their crude oil business.

In my first draft, I was openly critical of the oil industry's stance on oil shale, and I quoted a number of economists, government officials, Congressmen, and others who shared my views. Some of *Life's* editors were skeptical nevertheless, and in later versions, while the giveaway sections of the story became if anything more strongly worded, my accounting of the oil industry's attitude on oil shale became rigorously neutral. In the final version, which was set into type before being killed, I as the author expressed no opinion about the oil industry's motives. I merely reported the existence of a controversy. I detailed the allegations of the critics and then I recounted the oil industry's rebuttals. Both sides received roughly equal space. (While I had acquiesced to this alteration in presentation in order to get the story in print, I returned to the tone of my original draft for the *Harper's* article.)

*Life* Editor Thomas Griffith said that he had killed the story because of doubts about the validity of my theories on the oil industry's feelings toward oil shale. I know his

doubts were sincere, and I can understand why he might have refused to run my first draft. But I don't feel it is right to refuse to run a factual report of a controversy merely because one disagrees with the one side. (Not long after my story was killed, *Life* published a detailed interview with Russian Premier Aleksei Kosygin.)

The real roadblock, as I saw it, was the concern of *Life's* business staff that if my story ran there might be a substantial loss of oil company advertising—in a report to *Life's* editors publisher Jerome S. Hardy placed the figure at between \$5 million and \$20 million. I feel this fear was unjustified. It is true some oil companies had made inquiries about my story. Though I do not dismiss the possibility I seriously doubt anyone actually made any threats. Indeed, I think many oil men would have welcomed an unbiased report.

The article's cancellation was thus the result of self-censorship. Though less sensational than collapse under pressure from powerful conspiracies it is, in my opinion, far more odious.

CHRIS WELLES  
Dumont, N.J.

### Reporter or Citizen?

#### TO THE REVIEW:

I have read with interest, amazement, and dismay the article by Roger M. Williams of *Time* and Michael Parks of the *Baltimore Sun* on the Clay Shaw trial [Spring, 1969].

I read with interest because Clay L. Shaw is my client. I read with amazement and dismay because of the unwarranted and baseless criticism of two highly successful, competent, and reputable journalists and men of integrity, Hugh Aynesworth and Jim Phelan. It is quite obvious to one familiar with the facts of Jim Garrison's erstwhile and fraudulent Kennedy assassination probe, as well as the Shaw case, that the authors of this article . . . failed to properly research the sub-

ject prior to publicly demeaning and criticizing two men for the part which they played in preventing a travesty on justice.

Messrs. Aynesworth and Phelan should be commended, rather than criticized, for the assistance they rendered to myself and my co-counsel in the defense of Clay Shaw. These two reporters became involved only after they had completely and thoroughly researched the facts, and knew that the erstwhile Garrison Kennedy assassination probe was a fraud and that Clay Shaw was a victim of a . . . public prosecutor who was obviously abusing and misusing the prosecutorial powers vested in him . . . for his own aggrandizement.

The authors have misquoted F. Irvin Dymond, co-counsel for Mr. Shaw, to the effect that "he did not solicit any reporter's help." I hasten to assure you that I personally solicited assistance from both Hugh Aynesworth and Jim Phelan. This fact is well known to Mr. Dymond and under no circumstances did he ever state to the authors of this article or to any other individual that such is not the case.

When Jim Phelan's *Saturday Evening Post* article appeared . . . I personally located him in Las Vegas and arranged to meet with him in New York. I personally requested that he furnish myself and my colleagues with documentary proof of various statements contained in his article. Jim Phelan told me that his only interest was in the truth. He had the facts and the documents to support his statements, and in the interest of justice, furnished me with copies of his documentary evidence and assured me of his assistance. The documents furnished to me by Jim Phelan were used by Clay Shaw's attorneys in his defense on numerous occasions and are now part of the public records, both in the Criminal District Court for the Parish of Orleans, as well as in the records of the U.S. District Court, Eastern District, Louisiana.

Hugh Aynesworth is unquestionably the most knowledgeable living individual on the subject of what transpired in Dealey Plaza on November 22, 1963, as well as sub-

sequent related events. I became aware of this shortly after that fateful night of March 1, 1967, when I joined Clay Shaw in the Office of the District Attorney for the Parish of Orleans to arrange for his release and freedom after he had been charged by Garrison.

To cite Mark Lane as an authority, or with approbation, as was done by the authors of this article, is to add insult to injury. Lane is a scavenger. . . . His trademark is insinuation and innuendo. . . .

In closing, I might say that I find it rather strange that the authors of this article make no mention of the concerted effort by Jim Garrison to silence the news media, as evidenced by the charges filed by him against such individuals as Walter Sheridan, Rick Townley, and others.

EDWARD F. WEGMANN  
New Orleans

#### TO THE REVIEW:

In their report on the Clay Shaw trial, Roger M. Williams and Michael Parks raise a whole catalog of philosophical issues, but they define the "key point": the reporter's job "as a journalist was to report, but not to aid one side or the other."

Some of the extra-reportorial activities they cite do seem to be quite extra. But a reporter is also a citizen and should be a lover of justice. Where would Williams and Parks draw the line? When a reporter has special knowledge that a witness is lying should he remain silent while justice is thwarted? Williams and Parks chart the path for the journalist by remarking that "it is a long step from criticizing an official and his actions to helping to blunt them through actions of one's own." But criticizing an official is helping to blunt his actions, so the chart is no chart at all. I wish the authors had pursued this problem a good deal further and a good deal deeper.

When Senator Tom Walsh had Secretary Fall on the stand in the

Teapot Dome inquiry and had got nowhere, the late Paul Y. Anderson of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* sent Walsh a note: Ask him where he got the money to improve his ranch. And the whole sordid story came out. Should Anderson have sat by silent? Was this participation? Was it unjustified? It was one of many, many contributions Anderson made to the public good by following the same course.

On a dull Saturday morning just before the start of the 1960 Presidential campaign Press Secretary James Hagerty told a dozen reporters around his desk that President Eisenhower was going on a trip (so trivial I don't remember where or why) that would occupy him during the last weeks of the campaign. I said (asked? remarked? commented?): "That doesn't leave the President much time to campaign for Nixon, does it?" Hagerty looked at me a moment, then gave a big grin, and said nothing.

I did not use this passage, because without an answer my question was an editorial expression of opinion, and because Hagerty's kinesic response was open to many interpretations. (You might ask Hagerty what he meant. My *opinion* was that he meant: I planned it that way.) United Press used the question and, I think, mentioned Hagerty's grin. Would Williams and Parks like to say which course, if either, they would commend?

There is another phase of reporter participation. The late Gene Meltzer, as assistant city editor of the New York *Daily News*, was fascinated by fire extinguishers and carried a large assortment of them in his car—for gasoline fires, for burning tires, for convertible roofs, for empty cars, and for cars with people in them, and so on. Driving home on Grand Central Parkway one morning about 4 o'clock, he rounded a curve and came face to face with a burning car on the grassy bank.

Meltzer seized two of the proper extinguishers, leaped from his car, and had the fire out almost instantly. As the other driver came forward from behind his rescued car Meltzer struck a twarn't nuthin' attitude and awaited an outpour-

ing of gratitude. The indebted motorist stopped a couple of feet away and screamed: "Why don't you mind your own goddam business?"

Is that what Williams and Parks are saying?

EMMETT SWISSELM  
Long Island City, N.Y.

TO THE REVIEW:

Messrs. Williams' and Parks' main argument against my role in the Shaw case was my obvious visibility, in that I sat forward of the railing during the entire trial. This came about not "due to a long, friendly relationship with Garrison" but from sporadic meetings which began when I was chairman of the Radio-TV News Association of Southern California and invited him to address a banquet.

I became especially involved with Mr. Garrison when his web of intrigue spread to Southern California with subpoenas of several men prior to the Clay Shaw trial. At the Clay Shaw trial I took advantage of my newsman's interest and of my relationship with the district attorney to get a key seat among men who might rewrite history. As a result, I was able to obtain greater insight into the State's case and hear the internal dialogue, which I was able to reveal in a series of post-verdict reports....

A reporter's efforts in my opinion should not be judged on what his role appears to be but rather on what he files or broadcasts. Neither gentleman ever asked for tapes of my broadcasts, which would have quickly showed that I walked the straight line of balanced news.

Let me also point out one area where most of the press attending

the trial failed miserably. From my press phone I could hear other newsmen broadcasting or dictating with a copy of the Warren Commission report at their elbow. Instead of reporting what had just happened inside the courtroom, many referred to what a specific witness had told an official agency at the time of the assassination, or what the Commission had concluded about that witness' judgment!

I attended one of the nightly gatherings at the apartment of New York *Times* correspondent Martin Waldren which critic Mark Lane referred to as "ministry of truth" sessions. I found that byline writers from some of the country's major periodicals all were anti-Garrison, and all spent many hours running down the man and his case. Some made notes and indicated they would add a point to their copy. What more might have been accomplished if they had pooled their talents for a real examination of the allegations regarding the tragedy of Nov. 22, 1963?

In conclusion, let me underscore that I, too, found District Attorney Garrison's case against Clay Shaw sorely lacking in substance. But I did find the Zapruder film showing the President's death (which I had never seen before) utterly stunning. I found much testimony by government officials equally stunning as they detailed their oversights—or bungling, if you will—in public for the first time. That courtroom dialogue is now available for any participating reporter or amateur sleuth to dig into.

ART KEVIN  
News Director, KHJ  
Los Angeles

EDITOR'S NOTE: See comments by Messrs. Parks and Williams in UNFINISHED BUSINESS, Summer, 1969.

## Unlate Thomas Storke

TO THE REVIEW:

Let's see, what did Mark Twain say?

It was a delight to reread the exchange of letters between Westbrook Pegler and Thomas M. Storke [Summer, 1969]. But to call T. M. the "late" Thomas M. Storke is an exaggeration that should not go unnoticed. The very much unlate Mr. Storke is editor and publisher emeritus of the *News-Press*. He is not involved in the newspaper's operations, but you can find him in his office six days a week. On the seventh day he rests at his ranch. He will be ninety-two years old until November, but he makes himself sound older by saying, "I'm in my 93rd year."

Late? Not on your life.

Paul Veblon  
Executive Editor  
Santa Barbara News-Press  
Santa Barbara, Calif.

## Addenda: Fortas

TO THE REVIEW:

There is no doubt that *Life* deserves great credit for its reporting in the Fortas case [PASSED COMMENT, Summer, 1969] or that *Newsweek* added a significant detail. But it should be noted for the record that the best newspaper running coverage was done by two members of the Los Angeles *Times*' Washington Bureau, Ronald J. Ostrow and Robert Jackson. This was common knowledge in Washington because the *Post* on several days had to print *Times* coverage to improve its own daily stories. Three examples:

## Administration Divided on Newspaper Bill

"A house divided against itself...."  
(Seattle *Times*, September 25, 1969.)

## REPORT ON REPORTS

### Summaries and reviews of current literature in journalism

"What's Wrong with News: It Isn't New Enough," by Max Ways, *Fortune*, October 1969.

A *Fortune* senior editor's thoughtful analysis shows why journalism must break free of "outdated patterns and practices" of reportage which persist despite "marvelous new media for reaching a larger, better educated audience."

"Judging the Fourth Estate: A Time-Louis Harris Poll," *Time*, September 5, 1969.

A fresh study of the "public's confidence in the press, its trust and preference in news sources, and its attitudes toward some of the more controversial issues covered by the media" reveals that "skepticism of the American press is undoubtedly on the upswing, but . . . remains within parameters of trust and confidence."

"Newsweek (a fact) Is the Hot New Book (an opinion)," by Chris Welles, *Esquire*, November, 1969.

One of the most sophisticated of recent articles on the newsmagazines analyzes the style and substance associated with *Newsweek's* recent upsurge and with *Time's* loss of momentum.

"Goodbye, Dolly!—a reminiscence of the New York Post," by Jack Newfield, *Harper's*, September, 1969.

An irreverent report by an eminent *Village Voice* staff member on the "slow internal death" of the *Post's* "moral authority" and how, in his opinion, publisher Dorothy Schiff's "penuriousness and prejudices" have hurt.

"An Analysis of Newspaper Editorial Pay, 1954-1966," by Guido H. Stempel III and Paul H. Wagner, *Journalism Quarterly*, Summer, 1969.

A study based on thirty-three American Newspaper Guild contracts and data from other sources, including government, shows that "reporters' top minimums did not increase as rapidly as pay in other industries" and increases were not related to "any seemingly important motivations."

"Report of the Governor's Committee on Employment of Minority Groups in the News Media," State of New York, Chancellor Samuel B. Gould of the State University of New York, chairman.

Analysis and recommendations by a forty-one member committee on possible breakthroughs in editorial integration in the media capital of the nation.

"Annenberg," by Gaeton Fonzi, *Philadelphia Magazine*, April, May, 1969.

An unfriendly but journalistically acute profile of Walter Annenberg and holdings such as Triangle Publications, which operates broadcast properties, controls magazines, and until recently published two Philadelphia dailies.

"Control of Newsstands Gives Henry Garfinkle Power Over Publishers," by Ronald Kessler, *Wall Street Journal*, July 3, 1969.

Investigative report on the life, influence, and reputed unsavory practices of the monarch of Union News Company, the nation's largest newsstand retailer of newspapers and magazines.

DANIEL J. LEAB

May 9—a story showing the connections between Louis Wolfson, the financier related to Fortas, and Albert Parvin, a California businessman whose foundation had paid a fee to Justice William O. Douglas. Wolfson and Parvin had been named as co-conspirators in a stock manipulation case. In addition, the story pointed out that

Mr. Fortas' wife, Carolyn Agger Fortas, was retained by the Parvin Foundation.

May 14—a story establishing that FBI agents had interviewed Wolfson in prison the week before.

May 15—a story relating that the FBI found that Fortas had agreed to accept a \$20,000 annual fee from the Wolfson Foundation after he

joined the Supreme Court. This last story ran in the morning and was carried with credit by the *New York Times*. That same day Fortas announced his resignation.

MURRAY SEEGER  
Washington Bureau  
Los Angeles Times

## the lower case

### Wrong box

Better reporting of legislatures is indeed imperative if this July 17 item from the UPI Louisiana wire is an indication.

#### (HOSPITALS)

IN DECIDING THIS WEEK TO INVESTIGATE THE CLOSING OF THE LAKE CHARLES CHARITY HOSPITAL...THE LEGISLATIVE EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE, LIFTED THE LID ON A VIRTUAL PANDORA'S BOX OF SACRED COWS.

### COLUMNIST SPEAKS

## Journalism's 'Fatal,' Hal Boyle Declares

"journalism will kill you in the end, but until it does, it will keep you greatly alive," Hal Boyle, Associated Press columnist, told delegates to the National Newspaper Association (NNA) here Saturday.

Boyle's column has taken his readers to the battlefields of World War II, Korea and Vietnam through many a household dilemma and into the lives of the famous.

He spoke at a luncheon at the NNA's annual fall meeting and trade show at the Denver Hilton Hotel.

In his talk, "Confessions of a Columnist — Or, the Customers Always Write," Boyle, 58, quickly erased the notion that well-known columnists have desks in penthouses and are sought after by Presidents and movie stars.

"I spend very few evenings in night clubs with movie stars and sometimes a whole day goes by and there are no calls for help from



### Faster than . . .

A New Orleans States-Item caption writer describes reflexes which deserve their August 9 front-page treatment.

States-Item photo by James N. Pitts.  
ERIC ALEXANDER AND GERRARD RUSHING, Baton Rouge, look out the windshield of the car in which they were forced at gunpoint to drive from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. The gunman, they said, shot at Rushing from the back seat and would have hit him had he not ducked.

### It's also wounding

If the President failed to phone the day this Denver Post story appeared (October 19), it may have been due to compositor problems of his own (*Chicago Journalism Review*, August, below).

### Nixon thanks wrong man

Somebody at the *Daily News* got the bylines reversed on the columns of Lu Palmer and John S. Knight a few weeks back. So while conservative publisher Knight was writing about black G.I.'s black militant Palmer was writing a laudatory column about Richard M. Nixon. Soon after, Palmer received a thank-you note from the President.

### To bed in Boston

When the *Record American* is put to bed, it stays put (Seattle Post-Intelligencer, August 7).

essay

The neighbor said that Mrs. Kopechne was under sedation and should not be interviewed, "but this is her feelings based on what she told me."

The Boston Record-American yesterday was under sedation and could not be fought an attempt at an autopsy.

"They're not going to disturb my

### Decline and Fall

The sun sets on the prestige of college diplomas (Philadelphia Daily News, August 12) . . .

## ADVERTISEMENT ADVERTISEMENT How to Speak and Write Like a College Graduate

... and on the British Empire (Chicago Sun-Times, July 20).

### Queen Elizabeth sold

## Second reading

# Thomas Jefferson: “the press is impotent when it abandons itself to falsehood”

■ I am persuaded myself that the good sense of the people will always be found to be the best army. They may be led astray for a moment, but will soon correct themselves. The people are the only censors of their governors; and even their errors will tend to keep these to the true principles of their institution. To punish these errors too severely would be to suppress the only safeguard of the public liberty. The way to prevent these irregular interpositions of the people is to give them full information of their affairs through the channel of the public papers, and to contrive that those papers should penetrate the whole mass of the people. The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hésitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers, and be capable of reading them. . . .

Cherish therefore the spirit of our people, and keep alive their attention. Do not be too severe upon their errors, but reclaim them by enlightening them. If once they become inattentive to the public affairs, you and I, and Congress, and Assemblies, judges and governors, shall all become wolves. It seems to be the law of our general nature, in spite of individual exceptions; and experience declares that man is the only animal which devours his own kind. . . .

I have never . . . even contradicted the thousands of calumnies so industriously propagated against myself. But the fact being once established, that the press is impotent when it abandons itself to falsehood, I leave to others to restore it to its strength, by recalling it within the pale of truth. Within that it is a noble institution, equally the friend of science and civil liberty. If this can once be effected in your State, I trust we shall soon see its citizens rally to the republican principles of our Constitution, which unite their sister-States into one family. It would seem impossible that an intelligent people, with the faculty of reading and right of thinking, should continue much longer to slumber under the pupilage of an interested aristocracy of priests and lawyers, persuading them to distrust themselves, and to let them think for them.

From “The Living Thoughts of Thomas Jefferson,”  
John Dewey, editor; David McKay, Inc. (1940).

